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Arrest campaign continues, targets of terrorist activities announced

Arduous task

MOHAMMED AL-QADHI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemeni authorities arrested last week two people from al-Eman university affiliated to Sheikh Abdulmajeed Al-Zindani of the Islah Party. Reliable sources said that the intelligence arrested Wednesday a student at al-Eman university named Abduljabar al-Marwani. He was taken from his house at Sa'wan district North East of Sana'a. Two days earlier, the authorities arrested Dr. Ahmad al-Daghshi, a professor at Sana'a and al-Eman universities. The two persons were detained as their names were mentioned during interrogations with the killers of Jarallah Omar and the US doctors. Al-Marwani was wanted by the security but his arrest was

made later as he was outside Sana'a; he has been in Dhamar doing some practical studies at al-Eman university. Once he arrived in Sana'a, police arrested him for interrogation.

Al-Daghshi was snatched from the street by the intelligence without the knowledge of his family, which learned that he was in prison several days later. It is believed that his name was mentioned during investigations with the two killers.

Investigations with the detainees have proven they were all from a fundamentalist Jihad movement headed by Ali Jarallah, assassin of Jarallah Omar, YSP Assistant Secretary General. According to the investigators, the cell members were planning to carry out terrorist operations and assassinations targeting several foreign interests as

well as politicians, writers and journalists for allegedly adopting and calling for secularism. Among the list of names were: Salem Saleh Mohammed former presidential member, Abdulmaailk al-Mikhlaifi Secretary General of Nasserite Unionist Party, Dr. Kassim Salam Secretary of Ba'ath Party, Dr. Abdulaziz al-Makaleh President's cultural advisor, Abdulbari Taher former chairman of Yemeni journalists syndicate, Nasr Taha Mustafa head of Saba News Agency, Dr. Abu Bakr al-Saqqaf, Ali al-Surayy head of the YSP information and media department, Ahmad al-Hubaishi, Mohammed al-Makaleh a writer, Sameer al-Yusufi editor of al-Thaqafiah Weekly, and others. The list is said to have included over 30 persons.

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Yemen's first anti-terrorist unit celebrates its inauguration at the paramilitary forces headquarters in Sana'a January 11, 2003. The need for the unit, which is trained by the British army, arose amid concerns that Yemen had become a haven for Muslim militants, including the al Qaeda network which Washington blames for the September 11 attacks on the United States. The poor Arab state is the ancestral home of al Qaeda leader Saudi-born Osama bin Laden.
REUTERS/Mohammad Howis

Security agreement annulled

Yemen Times Staff

The German Ambassador to Yemen, Mr. Wrener Zempich said Thursday that the Yemeni-German Agreement on exchange of criminals had been annulled years ago. At a press conference held by the German and French ambassadors to mark the 40th anniversary of the Elysee Treaty Mr. Zempich said that the security agreement signed between former Peoples' Democratic Republic of Yemen and East Germany in

1971 was made invalid upon the German unification in 1990. He pointed out that the two countries agreed on January 8, 1992 to abolish the agreement and since then it has become off work.

A Yemeni official source last week denied the statement made by the German Ministry of Justice Spokesman that the agreement did no longer exist and that Germany was responsible before Yemen if it turns over Mohammed al-Mouyad and his companion to the US. The Yemeni official said the

agreement was still valid till today. The two Yemeni citizens are being held by the German authorities upon the US request for they are suspected of being al-Qaeda financiers.

The German ambassador clearly said everything is now in the hands of the German court which can decide with the evidence provided to it by the USA whether the two Yemeni citizens are to be turned over to the US or brought back to Yemen.

Continued on page 3

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US asks Yemen to postpone trial of US doctors' killer

YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The US has asked Yemen to postpone the trial of the three US doctors. Reliable sources at the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) told Yemen Times Saturday that the US has requested the Yemeni authorities not to hurry up in trying the killer of the three US doctors at the end of December, Abed al-Kamel. According to the

sources, the US believes there is some information which came out recently about the murder and might help in disclosing the compliance of the murderer and the people behind it. The Yemeni authorities have already informed the US that investigations into the murder have completed and that the case file will be shifted to court for the killer admitted his crime and therefore, the prosecution would be

concerned with the criminal rather than the political aspect of the incident.

On the other hand, the Attorney General, Dr. Abdullah al-Ulufi allowed the YSP committee concerned with the assassination of their leader, Jarallah Omar to probe into the investigations' results carried out with Ali Jarallah, YSP leader's assassin. The committee obtained Saturday a copy of the investigations report.

USAID office reopens

ABDUH M. ASSABRI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A delegation from the United States Agency for International Development, USAID headed by Douglas Heisler, the Health Development Officer and James C. Carlson, Senior Program Officer are presently on a visit to Yemen for adding the final touches to reopen the USAID office in the country and to define future program opportunities.

In a press conference held on January 22 at the US Embassy in Sana'a, Mr. Douglas said that his agency is to offer USD 10 million to the benefit of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Finance matters will be dealt with by the delegation after its departure for Washington.

The success of USAID relies in large part on a commitment by the U.S. to support Yemen in this transition. USAID will contribute to these efforts by helping with basic healthcare, family planning services, and improved access to education at all stages, partic-

ularly for Yemeni women.

During 2003, the USAID intends to continue and expand its health and education activities to serve a greater number of communities in Yemen. Resources may also be used to fund program monitors.

This emphasizes the importance that the US government accords to development as a necessary companion to security measures.

Starting in the 1960s, USAID realized numerous development programs in Yemen such as, road building, water projects, building of schools, agricultural research and mineral surveys, NGO development, legislative and judicial reform, university scholarships and health training.

Yemen's economic and political development is essential for achieving the key U.S. goal of stability in the Gulf region. Threatened by multiple and severe development challenges, Yemen requires targeted interventions and reforms in order to achieve political and economic stability. Yemen is critical to U.S. counterterrorism interests in the post-September 11th envi-



Douglas Heisler

ronment, and the United States will work with the Government of Yemen to deal with terrorists on Yemeni soil and to deter terrorists from seeking refuge in or transiting through Yemen.

Despite the success that the government of Yemen is achieving with its stabilization program, major economic and development challenges remain. The Republic of Yemen is among the 25 poorest and least developed countries in the world.

Eritrea holds Yemeni boats

Yemeni fishermen appealed Tuesday to responsible authorities to quickly interfere and secure the release of their fishing boats held by Eritrean authorities and to protect them against what they described as Eritrean harassment they are being exposed to in the fishing areas shared by two countries.

An Eritrean guard unit has held a number Yemeni fishermen boats in the shared fishing areas and forced them to go to Eritrean port of Mosawa, and detained them there, confiscating their boats and their contents. The fishermen confirmed that they were fishing in al-Gibal islands region.

Al-Wahda newspaper mentioned last Wednesday that the Eritrean authorities had earlier seized five Yemeni boats in Asab. Last week those authorities had withdrawn permissions granted to more than 300 Yemeni boats working in Mosawa areas and prevented them to enter Eritrea.

Yemen-German Graduates Conference held in Aden

Yemen-German relations towards better understanding

ADEN BUREAU
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

ADEN- The Yemeni Germany Graduates' Conference was held on January 23 in Aden in the presence of tens of Yemenis who graduated from Germany. The event is held annually and this year it has been held in Aden under the title 'Yemen-German Dialogue' for winning Yemen reputation as a beautiful and good country. As for Yemen's image in Germany, Kampiz Ghawami noted that Yemen has enjoyed a good reputation on the part of the Germans. He also indicated that the German government's attitude towards Yemen is highly positive.

A press conference was also held last Wednesday 22 January in Sana'a in the presence of Dr. Kampiz Ghawami, the Chairman of World University Service (WUS) and Mr. Jedow Chebch, the Director of the Yemeni-German House for Cooperation and Culture. This came after the German Delegation toured Yemen in preparation to hold

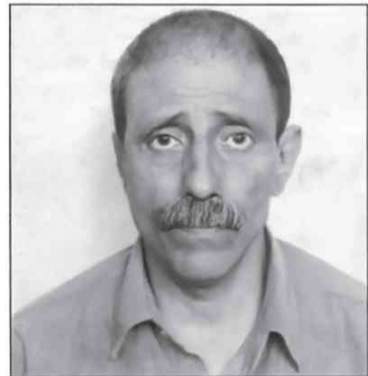
the German Graduates Conference.

Dr. Mohammed Zain Aidaroos, the Public Relations Manager at Aden University and the Chairman of German Graduates Association in Yemen said, "This is a joint activity between the German Graduates Association and the World University Service based in Germany as well as the Yemeni-German House for Cooperation and Culture and the German Embassy in Sana'a."

On his part, Dr. Kampiz Ghawami talked about the objectives and tasks of the WUS, which was founded in 1920. He stressed on the fact that WUS supports the right to education in all stages. He pointed out that there is a number of students study in Germany including Asia, Africa and Latin America.

He said that the number of the Yemeni graduates from Germany for the years 2001 and 2002 has reached 350.

The WUS also supports students by providing them with round-trip flight



Dr. Mohammed Zain Aidaroos, Public Relations Manager-Aden University

tickets and around 350 Euro yearly along with material support estimated at 10,000 Euro.

When asked about the two Yemenis currently held captive in Germany, Dr. Ghawami said that he hoped that the issue would be resolved soon and expressed his confidence that this issue wouldn't affect the strong bilateral relations between Yemen and Germany.

Conclusion of the poverty alleviation strategy symposium

The oriental symposium and workshop on the strategy of poverty alleviation was concluded last Thursday at the Ministry of planning and Development.

The 2-day symposium discussed a number of factors pertaining to education, health, civil society and Uganda trial of implementing this strategy. The symposium was concluded with results

and recommendations and defining fields of cooperation and assistance that were the main goals of holding this workshop.

The symposium had been inaugurated on Wednesday by the ministry of planning word delivered by the vice minister Abdul Rahman Tarmoom, followed by the Oxfam word presented by Mrs. Rajni Khanna, then the word of

woman national committee delivered by Mrs. Horyan Mashhoor, the word of the civil society organization presented by Mrs. Ramzyah al-Eryani and concept, preparation, goals factors and budgetary issues.

Representatives of the international organizations, representatives of civil society organizations and a number of journalists attended the symposium.

Parliament calls upon Yemenis to demonstrate:

Prevent war on Iraq

In a session held last week, the Yemeni parliament called upon Yemeni people to stage peaceful demonstrations against the US-led war to attack Iraq. Parliament members strongly criticized the US military buildup in the region and said in

a statement that the threat of attacking Iraq confirms that there is a plan to change the political map in the Arabia Peninsula so as to strengthen 'Zionist' control of the region. It also asked demanded that the government denounces any strike against Iraq and

the offensive actions committed against the Palestinian people.

As the US seems committed to go for a war against Iraq, it is expected that many massive rallies and protests would take place in the coming days in Yemen and other Arab countries.



Students in Sana'a show their solidarity during a recent demonstration supporting Palestine.

(YT Archive photo)

To promote higher education standards

US\$ 5.300.00 loan granted

RIDHWAN AL-SAQQAF
ADEN BUREAU CHIEF

Under the auspices of the Prime Minister, Dr. Abdulqader Bajammal and Mr. Yahya Mohammed Ashoabi, the Minister of Higher Education and the National Bank representatives, a workshop on ameliorating the higher education concluded last Thursday 23.

Preparing future strategy for the higher education was on top of the agenda. The overall cost of this project has totaled USD 5.300.000 from the World Bank and the government of Yemen to Aden and Sana'a Universities.

The implementation period will extend from 2003 to 2006. The new project aims basically at improving the capability of the general education and qualitative university education.

Participants in the workshop focused on the main objectives of the project, executive plans, and its significance to promote the institutional competence in both Sana'a and Aden universities particularly in colleges like, medicine, science, education, and administrative human rights.

During the workshop, attendees as well as participants have been informed on methods of running loans offered by the World Bank and the government of Yemen in order to make a success of this project.

The 2-day workshop was attended by Yemeni private and public university

rectors, deans, representatives from international organizations, the World Bank, the British Council, and the UNESCO. Participants recommended expanding the new project in order to include other of the Yemeni universities, making use of the loan for the benefit of improving the Yemeni university competence and linking the higher education strategy to the economic and social development plans.

Participants also put great stress on coordination between that strategy and the general education strategy.

An emphasis was also on giving a chance to making more dialogues and discussions with the concerned bodies.

On his part, Dr. Saleh Basorah, the Rector of Aden University said that the university had witnessed a number of holding vital activities such as, opening dental clinics, holding the Italian Medical Conference, and inaugurating the higher education project.

The university of Aden is now seeking to open a number of laboratories at the university for the benefit of academic studies.

The inaugural ceremony of the central laboratory for the scientific researches was attended by the Deputy of the Higher Education Minister, Mr. Mohammed Bin Mohammed Motahhar, Dr. Saeed Jabali, Vice Rector of Aden University for Academic Affairs.

Readers' Voice

Yemen Times is reintroducing a popular feature "Readers' Voice" - formerly known as YT Opinion Poll.

This is your opportunity to have a say on world and local affairs.

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

Do you think that the parliamentary elections should be postponed if the war against Iraq starts before elections' date?

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Will a U.S. led war against Iraq begin between now and the end of March?

Answers:

Yes: 69%
No: 22%
I don't know: 9%

Go to our website at: yementimes.com/#poll and have your voice heard!

Farewell Mr. Hata Yoshiaki

Mr. Yoshiaki Hata, deputy chief of mission at the Japanese embassy in Sana'a, has left Yemen on 22nd January. Mr. Hata will be assuming his new post as Head of the counselor Department at the Japanese embassy in Moscow. He left Yemen after serving for 2 years and 3 months in Sanaa. "I loved Yemen very much. I loved its people, its life style, and its cultural heritage," he said. "if I could, I would have stayed longer and sacrificed my life in Yemen to support Yemen's social development projects and the poverty reduction strategy."

Mr. Hata has had series of meetings with many Yemeni officials specially

the Minister of planning and Development and others.

He also has devoted himself to teach Japanese language to the Yemeni instructors of the Japanese language, and the cultural and human exchange between Yemen and Japan. During his period, Yemeni officials such as Minister of foreign Affairs Dr. Al-Kirby, and the Mayor of Sana'a Mr. Al-Kahlani, have visited Japan, and the Japanese Vice Minister of foreign Affairs Mr. Seikan Sugiura, has visited Yemen. Mr. Hata is



very eager to promote the mutual understanding through the dialogue among civilizations. He also helped Dr. Shaif Badr, Deputy Director of Asia and Australia Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in issuing a detailed report on the Yemeni-Japanese

Relations.

As Yeen Times, we would like o thank Mr. Hata for his invaluable contributions to Yemen, and wish him well in his new mission in Russia.

Al-Syani kidnapped

Tribal sources reported on Saturday that a 25 military unit has started shelling one of the houses of the kidnapers of a young man called Tareq al-Sayani, who was kidnapped from Sanhan area, to gain personal interests from Yemeni government.

This comes after the 24-hour ultimatum given by President Ali Abdullah Saleh to release the boy was over. The source added that members from al-Zaidi tribe continue to hold Tareq al-Sayani, a tribesman belonging to the Sanhan tribe, who was kidnapped from Sanhan area. The kidnapers objec-

tives were to gain personal interests from Yemeni government. On the other hand Sanhan tribe set up a checkpoint to prevent Khawlan tribes from passing through until the kidnaped returns and let arbitration in the hand of Sanhan tribe to which the Yemeni president belongs.

Security authorities arrested people belonging to al-Zaidi Sarwah-Marib and were put in prison as hostages until the boy is released. Khawlan sheikhs attempted to give Sanhan tribes arbitration guns against removing the checkpoints to put an end to the case.

Shamil Bank expands its relations

The two deputies of the General Manager of Shamil Bank of Yemen & Bahrain Mr. Eiz al-Deen Heeba and Mr. Ahmed Ameen Kasem kicked off their tour to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt in which they started negotiations aiming to establish banking relations with the major banks in those

countries. The two men visited Turkey Bank, Jordan Islamic Bank, Byblos Bank in Beirut and al-Faisal Islamic Bank in Cairo.

The Shamil Bank started its activities in February 17 2002, and is among the fastest growing banks in Yemen.

Continued from Page 1

Arduous task

Investigations are reported to have proved a link between the cell and the Yemeni Jihad movement whose members were educated at the hands of the Egyptian Jihad movement members who were deported from Yemen some years ago. The Yemeni authorities have also launched an arrest campaign against the Yemeni Jihad members since 1998, which coincided with a similar campaign against Aden-Abyan Islamic Army members after the Abyan fiasco in which some foreign tourists were killed. The government announced in late 1999 the execution of the army chief, Abu Al-Hasan al-Mihdar.

Observers believe that the discovery of the Ali Jarallah's cell and making sure that it has links with Jihad indicates that there are sleepy cells of Jihad, Aden army and others which might find a match with al-Qaeda whose members are still being hunted down by the authori-



Dr. al-Dukhaish

ties, mainly those people whose names were mentioned in the FBI's lists like Abu Assem al-Ahdal and Fawaz al-Rabee.

To meet the challenges of these groups, the Interior ministry announced last week that it is going to launch the second phase of the electronic monitoring on some important places and streets in the capital. It will install cameras that are connected to an operation room in the ministry which will make it easier for the security people to monitor any terrorist activities and thwart them. This phase will target 15 important places. The ministry announced earlier this month that a new security plan to fight terrorism and control outlaws will be initiated.

This, of course, shows that the fight on terrorism is representing the real challenge of the government which will spend a lot on these pans at the expense of development.

Security Agreement ...

The German court is still waiting US evidence on connection of the two persons with al-Qaeda. He pointed out that the security team visit which was scheduled on Tuesday has been postponed for health problems of the head of the delegation and that it will be made some time later, without giving a specific date. He said the visit was arranged for before the al-Mouyad case. However, he said this issue will top the talks of the two sides when the visit is made. The team headed by deputy minister of interior was reported that it would visit al-Ehsan center and probe into its activities.

The release demands of al-Mouyad, an Islah leading member, were stepped up last week. The Islah party women department staged a woman demonstration last Wednesday to the German Embassy, demanding the German authorities to set him and his companion free. Around 3000 women protested their arrest and denounced that behavior on the part of Germany. The protesters lifted posters and banners denouncing terrorism and demanding his immediate release. They demanded the Yemeni government to continue pressuring the Germans to set him free.

A similar protest was made last Sunday organized by the women popular committee in defence of al-Mouyad. The protesters also called for raising money to defend al-Mouyad of whom Yemeni official sources said was trapped to go to Germany so as to meet a US benefactor who would support Al-Ehsan

charitable center of al-Mouyad.

A German Die Velt newspaper wrote in a recent issue that Al-Mouyad did not travel to Germany for medical treatment but it was a trap designed by the American Investigations, and that the FBI had persuaded a Yemeni man that there is an American Muslim who wants to donate \$25 million to be used for terrorist acts in the Middle East. And that the amount will be invested for the benefit of Al-Qaeda and for Hamas Movement in Palestine.

The Yemeni government said it repeatedly demanded that they should be sent back to Yemen and that they would be tried if proven guilty or having links to al-Qaeda.

The statement of the German ambassador concerning the abolition of the security agreement indicates that the Germans will have a strong justification if they turn al-Mouyad and his companion to the US in case they are proved guilty. The German ambassador told the protesters that "Germany is bound by international treaties" in this regard.

The French and German ambassadors to Yemen highlighted in the press conference the Elysee Treaty significance to their two countries. The French ambassador said France and Germany have a matching projects and activities in Yemen in terms of supporting the poverty alleviation programs and other development projects. A film on the steps to this treaty was shown to the audience at the Yemen cultural center. A reception was then held and attended by a number of diplomats and media people.

JMP follows Omar's case

Joint Meeting Parties held a normal meeting on Tuesday Jan. 20 2003 in Sana'a headed by Dr. Kasem Salam, secretary of the leadership of Ba'ath Party attended by all JMP representatives.

A national committee was



formed to follow up the current investigations into Jarallah Omar assassination, assistant general-secretary of the Yemeni Socialist party in a way to guarantee the investigation processes and in correct way.

45 persons on hit-list

The current investigations into Jarallah Omar assassination disclosed last week a hit-list that includes 45 figures that extremist Islamic elements want to target among which are secretaries-general, politicians, intellectu-

als, pressmen as well as religious personalities that extremists had accused being secular and Masonic.

In spite of claiming to notify those on the hit-list, the authorities of investigations have not warned them.

Female candidates need help

Aiming to build a democratic awareness among the society through supporting women and activating their political rights in voting and nomination, Arab Human Rights Foundation, under Dr. Waheeba Fare'e, Minister of Human Rights' patronage, and in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, held on Sunday Jan. 26, 2003 a discussion meeting on the difficulties and challenges female candidates face and how they can be overcome.

Secretaries-general of political parties and the heads of constituencies for the parties participated in that event by exposing their support for women political participation as well as all the obstacles that women face besides giving the procedures that parties should take in favor of sup-

porting female candidates, either those independent or those partisan affiliation.

In addition, a number of women, who had been nominated during 1993-1997, participated, along with local council candidates, to display their previous experiences for the candidates of the next election to benefit from.

Moreover, international and national organizations and governmental departments and democracy activists in the country participated as well.

There were working groups to search for whatever that could support female candidates in the electoral campaigns and to discuss the points of view of parties, candidates, media, and national and international organizations...etc.

European Commission supports elections

A memorandum of understanding was last Sunday Jan. 19 signed at the headquarters of the elections supreme committee by Yemen and the European Commission upon which the European side would offer euro 455 thousand to the elections committee as contribution to support the parliamentary elections in April 2003. Mr. Alawai Mashour, in charge of foreign in the Electoral Supreme Committee confirmed to Yemen

Times that the was part of supporting the election process in Yemen implemented by the UNDP. This grant will be specified for enhancing the institutional ability of ESC in preparation for the next elections 2003.

The memorandum was signed for the Yemeni side by Mr Khalid al-Sharif, chairman of the ESC and Abdulrahman Tartoum, deputy of the minister of planning and development.

UBL delegation visits Yemen-Gulf Bank

A delegation of the Pakistan-based United Bank Ltd. (UBL) headed by Chief of International Operations, Mr. Aman Siddiqui has visited the Yemen-Gulf Bank last week. The delegation members, which also included UBL-UAE General Manager Mr. Shaukat Mir and Mr. Anwar UBL Country



From right to left Maqbool Shamsi, Aman Siddiqui, M. Al-Zubairi, Shaukat Mir, and Mr. Anwar

Manager, expressed their great satisfaction with its level of cooperation and relations with the Yemen-Gulf Bank. During a buffet dinner in honor of the delegation in the presence of a number of European and Arab ambassadors and high-ranking figures, Mr. Maqbool Shamsi expressed his great desire to increase cooperation with the UBL, which also seemed keen to enhance its relations and partnership with the Yemen-Gulf Bank.

It is worth mentioning that UBL is one of the largest commercial banks in Pakistan. With almost forty three years of good standing to its valued clients, it has stood the test of time, producing assets of over Pakistani Pakistan Rupees 155 billion (USD 2.6 billion). The bank offers services through a wide network of over 1,000 domestic branches all over Pakistan and 15 overseas branches -including several branches in UAE- as part of global network.

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1st post-unity nationalization

Yemen's cabinet had adopted on 10 August 2002 a decision nationalizing the Ardh al-Ganatain Dairy & Beverages company in Sana'a and to be affiliated to the Yemeni Economic Establishment without compensation and without a pledge to preserve its stockholders rights under pretext that the company is indebted to the Yemeni Bank. During all the time till this date owners of the company have been engaged in discussion with the government on the issue but failed to reach agreement reversing the decision whose implementation has now become imperative.

AN economic source told Yemen Times that the council of ministers decision was taken even without consulting the company's officials to the reality

and without giving genuine reasons for the nationalization. The source added that when Dr Abdulkarim al-Eryani was a prime minister he had given his directives to form a committee for solving the dispute between the company and the bank but the bank. However, the bank continued in driving its plan until the issuance of the cabinet decision of nationalization last October.

The source has made it clear that "I think the reason behind the nationalization is that the Paris Club exempted Yemen from debts as 65% of the factory's debts was exempted"

"The company in question is a stock company shared by a number of businessmen from Sana'a, Aden and Taiz and employs around 600 workers" he added.

Four people killed

Unidentified persons from Ibb governorate had on Wednesday killed four people and injured seven others as they had ambushed a car carrying a number of people from Bani Saif tribe at Jabal

Muath district. Sources say the incident was a result of a dispute between the families of Bani Saif and Bani Rajih, both from the same region.

Sudan refutes Eritrean statement

The Sudanese foreign ministry had last week refuted a statement by the Eritrean government on meetings of Sudanese-Yemeni-Ethiopian tripartite statement recently held in Khartoum. A spokesman for the Sudanese foreign ministry said the Eritrean regime distributed a forged text of the statement among many circles. He added that the Sudanese foreign ministry confirmed that the final statement of the three




countries' meeting was read out and distributed at a press conference before the Eritrean authorities distribution of its fake version. The spokesman added that behavior of Eritrea represented continuation of a series of 'lies and allegations' it used to follow and aimed at challenging aims of the tripartite meeting and its noble intentions for realizing security and stability for the region's peoples.

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Changes suggested for Arab pact

Updating human rights

Changes to economic, social and cultural rights:

23. article (29), stated the right of forming unions and the right of strike, without identifying the freedoms, the matter that make such right without specific contents. Therefore we recommend that the article shall be divided into two sections, first one relates to the right of syndicate activities and freedoms related therein, and the second relates to the right of strike, accordingly the recommended amendment shall read as follows:

article (29): a- the state parties shall ensure to their citizens the right of forming unions and the right to join any syndicate that they may choose, without any restriction rather than the provisions of the specified syndicate, and in a way that protect their social and economic rights and defend their common interests.

b. The state parties shall ensure the syndicates right to coordinate and form federation, and guarantee the syndicates and federations right in forming Arab federations at the regional level, and freedom to join them.

c. The state parties shall ensure syndicates rights in exercising their activities freely without any restrictions other than that stipulated in the law, and to make necessary arrangements within a democratic society to maintain public order and security or to protect others' rights and freedoms.

Extra article: the state parties shall ensure the right of strike according to the provision of the valid law in the concerned country.

24. Article (30), the following statement shall be added to the article: "and to take all legislative, institutional and development arrangements to realize the enjoyment of the right of work and the right of comprehensive social security."

25. articles (31 and 32) shall remain as they are.

26. article (33) of the Pact shall be transferred to the political rights part, as it relates to the public service.

27. Extra article, newly added and recommended:

a. the state parties shall ensure to their citizens the equal opportunities in enjoying the right of work and shall take required arrangements towards realizing this right through regional and international cooperation (and shall pay special care to women).

1. to adopt policies that achieve economic, social and cultural sustainable development, and productive labour that secure permanent employment opportunities.

2. conduct professional training programmes to cope with the technological progress.

3. to provide legal and practical

guarantees for the provision of working conditions that ensure workers safety and health, and to specify working hours and vacations according to ILO rules, and to ensure legal guarantees for all laborers to enjoy equal opportunities of promotion according to the seniority and qualifications criteria, and such rights shall not be subjected to any other consideration.

b. the state parties of this Pact shall ensure to laborers of other state party provision of assistance and settlement and protection of their legal rights, including all human rights that the hosting state recognizes to Arab citizens other than its citizens, and on the basis of (national treatment) as with regards to the rights provided to them according to the concerned country law.

Extra article: recommended:

The state party shall guarantee to each citizen the right to enjoy social and physical and psychological health care, and provision of needed protection from endemic and occupational diseases, and to take institutional and material arrangements needed to secure enjoying such right in practice, and work to provide facilities, human resources, free medicines and healthy environment free from pollution.

28. article (34), to be amended as follows:

"the state parties shall ensure citizens' right of education, and basic education, at least, shall be compulsory, and high, vocational and university education shall be accessible to all and free, and shall quest for forming the free and integrated personality, and promoting and respecting human rights values and basic freedoms, the state parties shall provide all needed requirements to maintain this right".

29. Article (35), the phrase "to be proud of the Arab nationalism" from the text.

30. article (36), the following phrase to be added to the article: "the state parties shall ensure each individual's right of participation in the cultural life and provision of opportunities to promote their cultural, recreational, art and ideological talents and to benefit from the scientific and technical progress, and to protect material and moral rights of the authors, inventors and explorers, and to preserve the art, recreational, artistic and scientific material, including the national and humanitarian heritage (folklore) and the handicrafts."

31. Article (37), the phrase "the state parties shall ensure the right of using minorities' language: shall be added to the article.

32. Article (38), the following clause (c) shall be added to the article:

c. the state parties shall take nec-

essary arrangements to preserve these rights that includes:

1. Every person (male and female) right to form a family, and the state party shall provide required assistance and support to form the family, and enable it to perform its roles in the society, the marriage is held with the consent of the man and the woman, and with their free will without any enforcement whatsoever.

2. The state parties shall ensure health and psychological care of children, and shall protect them from any forms of social, political or economical abuses, and shall further provide special care and protection to mothers, before and after delivery, without any discrimination.

3. The state parties shall ensure the provision of special care and protection to disabled, and peoples with special needs, according to their needs and physical and mental abilities.

4. The state parties shall ensure provision of full care to older persons, for a decent life.

5. The state parties shall ensure the opportunities to achieve physical and mental development to youth with all available means.

33. Article (39), shall be cancelled as its contents already stated in article (38).

New article shall be added that include the right of new rights, such as: the right of development, the right of peace, the right of safe environment and the right of decent standard of living.

Recommendations on the mechanisms:

34. Article (40), shall be amended as follows:

1. The following phrase shall be added "Arab experts committee shall be established within the context of the Pact, and referred to as the Committee, for the advancement of human rights in the state parties".

2. The following phrase shall be added to clause (b) of article (40): "the Committee shall consist of seven members from the state parties' candidates, and each state shall have the right to nominate two persons from its natives, and one from another nationality to contest the elections, provided that the Committee membership shall include women".

3. Clause (e) of article (40) shall be amended as follows: "the Committee members shall be elected for tenure of four years, and the tenure of three of them may be extended to two years, however no extension shall be made to any member more than once".

4. clause (g) of article (40), shall be amended as follows: "shall Committee shall meet biannually at the invitation of the Committee chairperson, or the invitation of two

third of the members, the Committee may call the Secretary-General to attend its meetings without having the right to vote, however the Secretary-General may call the Committee to meet, if so required".

5. the clause (f) of article (40), shall be amended to include the following: "the candidates shall be of high experience and qualifications, and of noble conduct, and those who are specialized in the human rights and international law, also the experts shall serve on their own personal capacity, with due integrity, independence and on unbiased manner."

35. Item (3) of article (41) shall be amended to include the following: "the Committee shall submit a report that includes state parties' viand observations to the Arab League council, accompanied with specific recommendations".

36. Recommendations to add new articles to the Pact as follows:

Extra article:

a. the Committee is authorized to receive complains and reports on human rights violations by the state parties or complains and reports submitted by the NGOs, or groups or individuals, provided that a conditions shall be set forth as with regard to the procedures of submitting complains and reports, in order to ensure true protection of human rights."

b. the Committee is authorized to issue comments on interpreting the Pact articles.

Extra article: this Pact may be amended, changed or revised if one of the state parties or one of the recognized NGOs by the Arab League (based on the international human rights instruments), so required in

writing to the Secretary-General of the Arab League.

Extra article: the pact may include certain statement that allows the issuance of optional protocols complementary to the Pact.

Extra article: Arab Court for Human Rights shall be established.

It is recommended that new post of high commissioner of human rights shall be created, at a senior post level.

It is recommended that the following statement shall be added "the Committee shall have the right to consider state parties reports, in compliance with the practices of international human rights instruments, and to perform possible activities and programmes to

advance human rights in the Arab states".

Another statement to be added as follows: "the experts Committee shall be assigned to perform good office initiatives between two state parties to the Pact, in order to conclude amicable solution between them in issues related to human rights and basic freedoms respect so recognized in the Arab Pact".

General recommendation:

The participants recommended to form a drafting committee to the Arab Pact consists of experts assigned by the states and the NGOs who proposed the recommendation.

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Book review

Friends of Al-Maqaleh

"Friends" is the title of the latest book by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh published by Dar Al-Rees for books and publication in Beirut - Lebanon. In the 328-page book, he talked about 77 of his friends combining a wide-range of poets, critics, and authors whose names he used in his beautiful poems.

The preface of the book was taken from the book by Octavo Bath "Double Flame" in which he described love and friendship as two emotions sometimes complement each other and most of the times confronting each other. And that if we eliminate the physical aspect of

love then the similarities between the two emotions become more evident, as both are private and personal. For friendship exists with a person in particular and is impossible to happen suddenly but it evolves over time and is, much more complicated than love, unlike love which can take place in a shorter time span, in some cases like they say, from first sight!

With this introduction, Dr. Al-Maqaleh and hence, displayed poetry for 77 friends of his, talking about loyalty and friendship and his caring for his friends and his appreciation for the bounds of friendship. The

author even managed to stimulate feelings of friendship for legend poets such as Al-Mutanabi, Ahmed Showqi, and others whom he was influenced by their writings and styles. Yet most of the personalities in the book were personal friends whom he lived with for a long period of time and shared intimate times of friendship with them, that the poems seem as if they were personal letters to them. He managed in his book to gather people who are physically and maybe socially remote from one another in a splendid style of writing, producing a valuable book worth reading indeed.

Youth of the Holy War

Yemen has been unfortunately associated lately with terrorism in the Western media. You barely find anything more common than the word 'terrorist' in any recent news on Yemen.

The unfortunate Jibla tragedy when three American doctors were killed, and the other violent incidents that happened to the USS Cole, and Limburg are reasonable causes for us to be concerned about our image to the world.

There were recent efforts to try enlightening some Yemenis with fundamentalist ideas of the true meaning and objectives of Islam, and informing them on the need to be an example for citizens of the world.

One of the characteristics of Yemen is that it is a relatively conservative country and religious drive is one of the strongest among the Arab and even Islamic nations. USA knows this fact and on more than one occasion, it had accused the country of harboring terrorist groups and Islamic extremists.

When the gate for Jihad - Holy war - in Afghanistan was open, hundreds of youth opted and willingly dedicated their lives for the sake of fighting against the Russians. Those who died there were called martyrs and those who came back were termed heroes; time changed and the tables turned and there was no longer a holy war to be fought in Afghanistan. As a matter of fact, those who fought the Russians in the eighties became the target of a ruthless war against 'terrorism'. Now even Yemenis who had relations with the Taliban, or who once were Arab-Afghans are termed as terrorists and were said to be deceived youth.

Judge Hamood Al-Hitar was requested by the president of the republic to form the "Dialogue Committee" and speak through it to some of the fundamentalist Islamist Yemenis who were arrested during the last year and put some sense in their little passionate heads to persuade them to lay off their fanatic beliefs and to come back to the neutral line of thinking. Mohammed Al-Masani of Yemen Times met with Al-Hitar and filed the following interview concerning this issue.



Hamood Al-Hitar

Q: Can you tell us about the "Dialogue Committee" that was established for the negotiation with the youth coming from Afghanistan holy wars?

A: To start with I give my thanks for the newspaper on throwing light on such sensitive issues. As for the committee, it was a wise initiative driven by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, displaying a tolerant attitude towards differing points of view or philosophies. This is not only done with Islamic groups, he had been following this tolerant attitude with all differing political and non-political regimes. This attitude derived from the belief that negotiation and dialogue, are the best means in solving problems and reaching to the other side. This is the way that he is using in order to fight terrorism. But if negotiation fails, then law has to be enforced so that

the domination of the state's authority is ensured.

President Saleh, established the committee on the 24th August 2002, when he inaugurated the sixth annual conference for the GPC. It is composed of religious scientists and was initiated for the purpose of negotiating with the youth returning from Afghanistan and others who have fanatic religious beliefs, or differing Islamic concepts from what the bulk of the Islamic scientists maintain. On the 30th of that month, the President called for a meeting with a number of well-known religious preachers, and the rules and regulations of the committee were agreed on then. It was stated that I, Judge Hamood Al-Hitar, am president of the committee, and Sheiks Mushrif Al-Ma'rabi, Hassan Alsheik, and sheik Moqbil Al-Kudhi as members.

Q: What are the main topics that were discussed with the Youth coming back from Afghanistan?

A: We listened to their views to start with and their points of view regarding the topics in which they differ from the bulk of the religious scientists. Then the committee tried to establish a mid way between the extreme points of view in topics that didn't have a clear-cut statement in the Islamic religion. But what was already confirmed by the scientists and the youth differed with, was not negotiable and the youth had to be convinced regarding those aspects. It is our responsibility in front of god and then in front of the president to enforce the laws of Islam in the country.

Q: How do you evaluate their response to the initiative?

A: We were pleased with their response and we found that they could be envied about their strong beliefs. They displayed will to negotiate and to listen to dialogue. And they accepted conclusions that were derived from Quran and Sunna.

The session took the following topics:

- Dialogue on various topics,
- Concept of Holy war in Islam
- The Islamic State and State's Authority

- Obeying of the persons in charge and commitment to the constitution

- Infidelity and accusing of reverting from Islam

- Rules and regulations regarding non-Muslims in a Muslim country

- Preaching and changing of what is not accepted and who has the right to change and how

- The historical evolving of accounting system in Islam and the general deputation taking charge of it

- Violence and actions that disturb the public peace and actions against it

- Present situation in the Islamic nations and consequences, and

- Elimination of violence and referring to peace and dialogue.

All the persons were allowed to state their points of view regarding all those aspects and long discussions took place.

Q: What were the bases that you depended on in the dialogue?

A: This was a dialogue first of its kind that ever took place in Yemen. It was crucial for us to be very careful and specific when talking to these youth. And we depended on the Islamic laws, and the mechanism that Prophet Mohammed may peace be on him used during his life. We used a systematic organized way for the discussion so that we land up with productive talk and not just arguments. And we referred everything to the Islamic Shari'a and constitution, with documented confirmed references. We also maintained a decent civilized manner of discussion in which we listened to the other with respect, interest and understanding, and as a consequence we found great response and we can say it was a successful session. We kept in mind their mental situation being held in custody and depressed feelings. Most of those youth had learnt the Quran by heart and were quite knowledgeable in the Islamic rules. We also made it a point to distribute the participants into groups according to the topics of discussion. Each group consisted of 5-7 people and so they had their time and space to discuss and express themselves. And then we tried to link all the topics and generalize the results among all the participants so that all know what happened in all the sessions.

When we first went for the discussion we told them that we were there to give and take, and it was either they convince us or we convince them. We did not talk to them in their custody places, but we took them to a neutral place so that they feel as equal to us, and these are bases of dialogue in Islam, although in some situations we could not do that in the initial phases due to security problems in some of the districts.

Q: What is the role of Religious Scientists in combating terrorism and correcting fanatic beliefs?

A: Violence, terrorism and fanaticism are not in Islam. Islam is a religion of tolerance and mediation. These concepts are intruders on the faith and have to be fought by all levels of the society all in their own domain and abilities. The scientists' role has to do with awareness and educating the public about their religion and about the dangers of such concepts to their society and the importance of taking a united stand against them. Also we have to produce statements and judgments regarding debated issues, which do not have clear reference to them in the Quran and the Sunna, this in Islam is called Jihad.

Q: What is the stand that Islam takes towards the attack on Cole and Limburg, and the assassination of Jarallah Omar and the American Doctors?

A: These are crimes and the persons who committed them a criminal and should be punished accordingly. Islam has protected the human life and stated the worst punishment, which is death for him who intentionally terminates a human life with no authority. Also we have a concept in Islam called people of truce which means the people who are not necessarily Muslims but who have a

truce with us that they should be safe in our land unless they violate the law, then they should be punished according to the law. These people are such as the American doctors in Jibla and they should have not feared for their lives in our country. Prophet Mohammed clearly in more than one occasion preached about the importance of respecting such people and their rights.

Q: How many were the youth whom you had the dialogue with and what were the results?

A: They were 98 person, some who were accused of order disturbance and criminal actions. We concluded that they have to obey the authorities and the states laws and constitution. As it is the constitution is derived from the Islamic Shari'a which they believe in, one of the rules prevents any military groups taking place outside the states authority and so these must be vanished. Also to respect the states bounds with non Muslims and to maintain and provide to the safety of the people of the truce who live in our country. In the same time we took vows from them not to attack the embassies or any international organization. Those who have committed crimes will be punished according to the law, but the important thing is that they come to their senses and give up the fanatic attitudes.

Q: What were the difficulties that the committee faced with these young people?

A: Some of the most disturbing problems that we encountered are that some of the youth did not approve of the state as such! Some were saying that non Muslims can be killed just like that, and some did not believe that what they were doing is a sin, on the contrary they thought that anything else was a sin. Some had even declared war on anything that was not Muslim.

Most of those people with such fanatic beliefs were quite similar to those whom we call "Al-Khawarig", long ago. Those were people who rebelled against the Islamic state less than two centuries after Islam and caused disturbance and civil wars in the region then. So in our treatment of those today we tried to take a moral of how the leaders dealt with the same issue at that time. But what I want to say is that these issues were a consequence of a certain environment and emotional circumstances these youth had gone through. In Egypt for example, most of such people were actually imprisoned for sometime before they developed such attitudes, this leading to the conclusion that they must have gone through a certain kind of stress that evolved such violence or angry attitudes. Also most of those youth have been under a kind of brain washing since their early ages, that the fanatic concepts have been drilled into their tender minds. When they were sent in the beginning to Afghanistan it was holy war because they were fighting with Afghani people against the Russians, but once the Russians were out there was no point in fighting in the civil wars taking place in that area, it no

longer was Jihad or holy war. But at that time no one really paid attention to them and did not care about rehabilitating them and merging them into the society again, which caused their extremist attitudes and them to form their religious groups. A kind of finding themselves somewhere they belonged to.

We have to admit that those people are religious people with strong faith. They deserve to be treated with respect. And of the factors that ensured the success of our sessions was that we were decent in our dealing with them and did not use violence or any of the ways generally used in other countries in such cases.

Terrorism in Yemen is not as the international media present or display. We are much better than many other countries and the state is in control of the happenings. The terror acts that happened in the country are a consequence of many factors including the civil war in 1994 also the emotional feeding that takes place through many channels to the country's youth. And the reason that Yemen has been chosen as a field of such issues is the strategic location of the country along with the fact that it is a conservative country, which is liable to be a suitable place to grow any fanatic seeds. Also geographically speaking, the country has large areas and the longest coast in Arabia so there are many areas that are remote from the main regions and away from the public habitation. But the regime is taking strong measures against such cases so that chaos does not dominate.

Q: What do you read in the Iraqi situation?

A: There is no valid excuse to attack Iraq. USA and its allies have different reasons other than the so-called world peace that they have been barking about all the time. Any reasonable person with little common sense would be able to figure out the economic reasons under cover. And if the USA is still suffering from what is going on in Afghanistan, they will suffer more from what will happen in Iraq. We urge the American authorities to study the situation more rationally and to practice what they preach and to think deeply before going into a new situation while the wounds are still fresh. They should learn from their mistakes, and I know that most of the American people can see what is happening and are able to distinguish right from wrong.

Q: What would you like to convey to the readers finally through the newspaper?

A: Yemen is not a haven for terrorists! We are a peaceful country and we are friendly welcoming people to others. Islam is a religion of peace and tolerance and does not encourage violence and terrorism. I call on everyone who hears and reads anything negative about Yemen and Islam to research and pay some effort to know the truth, after all, it is easy to create a hearsay, but the truth is much more harder to find, yet it will finally prevail by God's will (inshaallah).

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الإستيراد والتوزيع بواسطة شركة الشرق الأوسط للتجارة

تجز	صنعا	عدن	الحديدة	المكلا	سينون
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SHARK ENERGY DRINK

شارك مشروب الطاقة

MAM & Royal

GUCCI
timepieces

An overview of a rich history (Part 2 of 3)

Maldivian royal searches for Yemeni roots



BY IRENA KNEHTL*
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

The earliest Maldivian history has it that an Aryan prince found his way through the magnificent, yet perilous sharp coral heads, finding an aboriginal race who marveled at this superb navigator and welcomed him King of Maldives. Whether Prince Koimala is legendary or not, it seems certain that the islands were first settled by Aryan immigrants who are believed to have colonized Sri Lanka at the time around 500 B.C. Further migration from South India, as well as Sri Lanka occurred. Historians record the presence of people of Dravidian stock, the Dhivis, Maldivians.

Around 947 A.D. the first recorded contact with the outside world began when an early Arab traveler depicts the potential for trade in pearls, spices, coconuts, dried fish and cowrie shells.

Ruling dynasties gave shape to what has become the Republic of Maldives just as volcanic movement shaped the 1,190 islands and coral reefs which rose above the ocean surface some hundred thousand years ago. Recorded in Maldivian history are the names of eighty four Sultans and Sultanas who belonged to six dynasties. The Maley or Theemuge Dynasty lasted 235 years under the rule of twenty six different sultans. The Hilali Dynasty ruled next for over a period of 170 years with twenty nine rulers. During the Hilali period Sultan Kalhu Mohammed invited the first foreign power to Maldives thus opening diplomatic relations with the world. Balm trade winds brought prosperity to this independent country until the sixteenth century when the Portuguese took more than a passing interest. It is during this time of Portuguese threat that one of the greatest Maldivian heroes, Mohammed Thakurufan, was born on the island of Utheem in the northern atoll of Thiladhummathi. Even today one can



The Grand Friday Mosque, Masjid al-Sultan Mohamad Thakurtaan al-Azzam is the biggest mosque in the Maldives

hear songs and stories which tell of Mohammed Thakurufan wiping out the entire Portuguese garrison. Mohammeds twelve years of peaceful reign was one of prosperity and reform. He died 1585 A.D. but his Utheem Dynasty ruled for 127 years, producing twelve rulers. The winds of war are never calm not even in idyllic islands such as Maldives. The Maldives faced a new treat from the Malabar Coast of South India. Maldivian forces repelled the Malabar forces, drove them back and under the leadership of Ghazi Hassan Izzadden, the Huraage Dynasty was founded. The Huraage Dynasty prevailed until 1968 when the Maldives became a republic.

The Arabs from Hadramaut in the Indian Ocean politics and history

The Arabs from Hadramaut have been migratory from time immemorial. For over a thousand years they maintained a very special relationship with the Southeast Asia region, the Indian Ocean

and its people. Historically, this relationship has been deep and permanent, extensive and continuous, culturally, it has been rich, manifesting itself in a range of ways and in every other sphere it has been pervasive and significant. They have participated in regions politics, histories and economy.

The world without boundaries The Hadarim, or Arabs from Hadramaut cherish a very strong sense of Arab identity which seems to overlap considerably with Islamic identity, to represent the ideal Moslem. The harsh political and economic realities in Hadramaut and the Islamic perception of geography, which considered the world to be a universal unit without territorial frontiers was an important drive behind the migration of the Hadrami Arabs.

The Hadrami Arabs are proud of their origins although they may have been geographically removed from Hadramaut for generations. The move-

ment of Arabs into the Indian Ocean region was gradual, sporadic and small in scale though always significant. In the traditional international order, which did not interfere with either freedom of movement or cultural and religious autonomy, Arab community thrived. The Arabs engaged in trade, commerce, shipping, shipbuilding, scholarship, missionary activities, diplomacy and even local politics.

The most important method the Arabs adopted to achieve this was marriage. It is therefore not at all surprising that many of the national heroes of the region as well as local ruling houses were actually Arab in origin.

Maldivian Royal House

What follows here are excerpts from my personal correspondence with Majid AbdulWahab of the Maldivian Royal House of Huraage, a modern economy and IT professor in search for his Yemeni roots.

Majid

The story of my family and that of my wife Aminath Didi also known as Antu, is that our families can be traced in uninterrupted written records in the Maldives as far back as the late thirteenth century. Most of our known progenitors lived on the island of Fura-Male. Other known roots in the Maldivian archipelago are many. Roots beyond these territories can be traced to various regions in Arabia and elsewhere.

In the 16th and 17th centuries King Siri Dhirikusa Loka - Sultan Hassan IX later known as King Manoel or Dom Manoel and his descendants lived as Christians in the Portuguese territory of Goa where they inter married with Portuguese subjects.

At the apex of this aristocratic structure was of course the Royal House of Huraa and were descended from Muslim Abbas of Hilaal through the Christian King Dom Manoel. The Huraagey Dynasty, therefore, was branch of the earlier Hilaaly Dynasty that reigned for two hundred years until the Sixteenth Century. There is evidence to suggest that the Hilaaly King Siri Bavana or Sulran Hassan I and his twin brother King Siri Loka Veeru - Hussein were descended through their mother side from previous Lunar Dynasty, going

back to the Eleventh Century AD and beyond into antiquity. The term Lunar Dynasty indicates that this was one of those ancient dynasties of sovereigns that traced their lineage to the heavens. Indeed until the Twentieth Century, Maldivian Sultans included the phrase kula Suda Ira, meaning descended from the Moon and the Sun in their royal titles. Only those Seedis and Sittis related by descent to the Hilaalya and the Diyamigilyys or were raised to the title of Klege were countered among aristocracy.

Seedis and Sittis in Maldives were warrant carrying descendants of Mohamed, the prophet, P.B.U.H. People of Arab descent who claimed ancestry from The Propher traveled and settled in many countries during mediaeval times carried warrants from the Islamic authorities of the countries they departed in order to establish their credentials.

** Irena Knehtl is an economist and writer. She has been involved in the Indian Ocean dialogue for economic cooperation and exploring economic cooperation among Red Sea countries.*

This is part of a larger undertaking tracing Yemeni contacts throughout the Indian Ocean and South East Asia.

For further suggestions and comments contact The Yemen Times



Scenes from Maldives

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Workers should be insured

BY MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Director of the Secretariat Office for social securities Sultan al-Hakemi, has recently given an interview to the Yemen Times conducted by Mohammed Bin Sallam in which talked in details on this vitally important social institution, the nature of its function, the benefits gained by employees in private sector establishments and problems facing the institution in performing its tasks.

At the beginning of his talk Mr al-Hakemi said the social security was established in 1978 according to the law No. 16 for 1978. It practiced its activities in 1988. Its role has been enhanced during the post-unification period with issuing the law No. 26 for the year 1991 which is still valid till today.

The social security law has a social and humanitarian dimension which is closely related to the life of the human beings and insuring their standards of living.

This part of an activity has to be given an attentive focus by all social classes and by all the civil society organizations and industry and commerce chambers.

If there is not a comprehensive coverage for the majority of our citizens, the society and the state will face an inevitable consequence such as, a high increase in unemployment and the needy without even being supported and given a helpful hand.

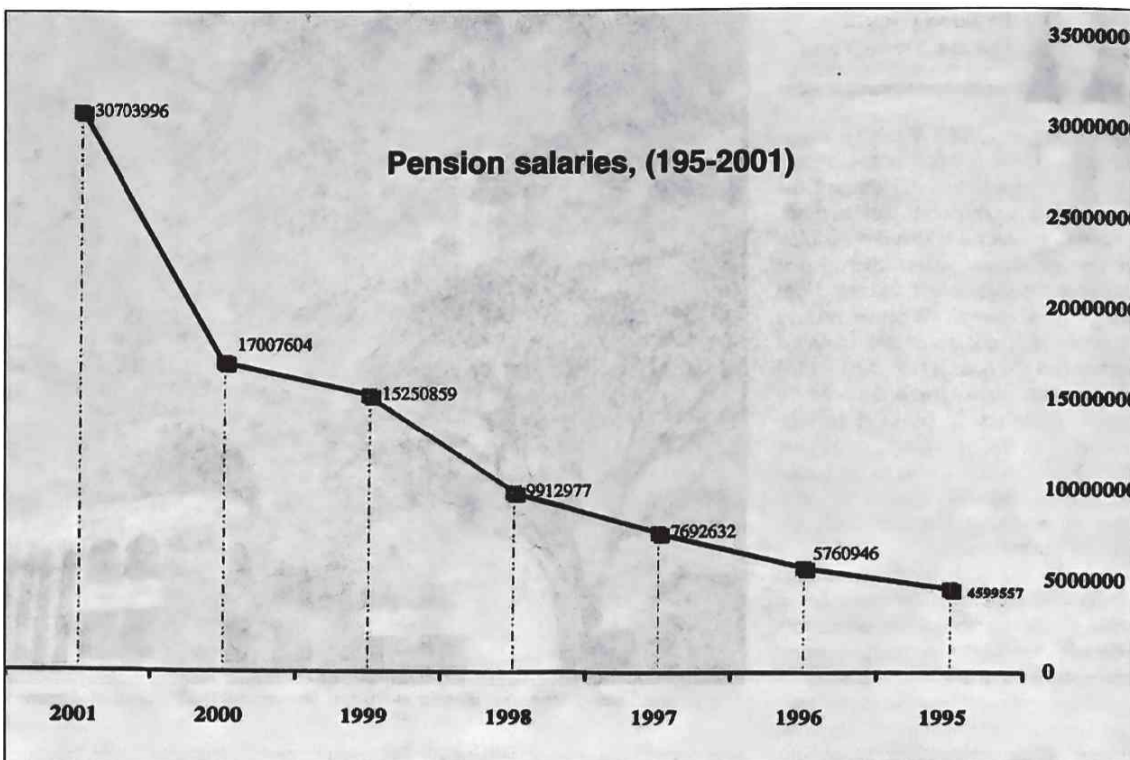
It is commonly believed that the social security laws start from the geographical gradation and then gender gradation. The former is related to the administrative division of the governorates and the latter includes number of workers below 15 and then moving to 5 people. In future we are planning to included 3 and then even



Sultan al-Hakemi

country except for the diplomats for taking insurance.

The social security insurance has performed its role properly through addressing the Yemeni foreign ministry to convince the embassies and



insurance, al-Hakemi has called on all the media institutions for taking part in all aspects to raise the great awareness of the significance of insurance.

"There are instructions and directives given by the cabinet and the leadership of the insurance institution to raise the significance of insurance for showing the positive aspects of insurance," al-Hakemi added further.

This will be supported by launching campaigns using the ways and means such as, delivering lectures holding symposiums starting from the capital secretariat and then the Yemeni governorates.

In addition to this, preparations are underway to publish a periodical during the current year which could play an active role in effecting awareness locally through distributing those periodicals to embassies and laborers working abroad.

On a question on the workers' service period and when they deserve the pension whether in death or in handicapped cases, al-Hakemi said that: "There are different periods, for instance, the time limit for the old age which is 15 years or at least 10 years. Preparations are underway to improve the salary system where the maximum salary is less than 7,000.

Unfortunately, some still get less than 1,000 per month.

On the other hand, al-Hakemi made it clear that his institution has mapped out plans for insuring Yemeni workers working abroad in collaboration with the Ministry of Expats.

Currently, a new law is about to be published in English language in order to be distributed to the embassies, legations, and the companies operating in Yemen.

The institution has decided to grant

simple loans for the pensioners at symbolic interests which do not exceed 9 percent of the overall loans. This can be done in a 5-year basis for those who want to get married or to establish micro-projects.

The most distinguished feature of the social security law in Yemen is that it doesn't distinguish between the foreign labor force and the Yemeni labor force. When an Arab or foreign worker, his or her overdue is paid to him within 24 hours on the condition that his service is one year or more.

During the last few years, more than 10,000 Arab as well as foreign employees get their pension money.

Currently, around 1,000 are recorded with the insurance from the Arab as well as foreign workers. There are still thousands of people who have not been insured for the above-mentioned reasons.

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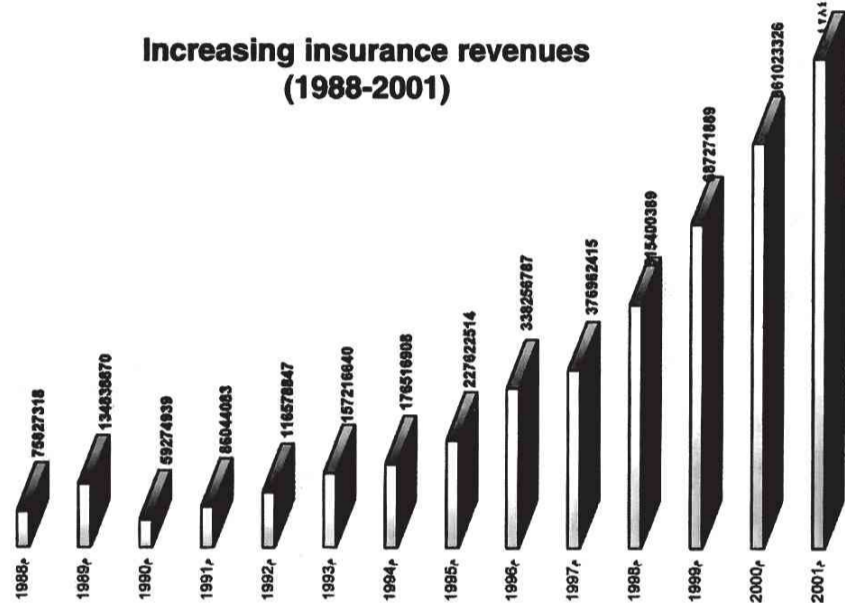
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Increasing insurance revenues (1988-2001)



The main objective of this institution as al-Hakemi indicated is to cover a wide-range segment of people working in different production sectors and institutions, specifically in the private sector.

The number of registrants within the social security list has reached 160,000. This is of course a small number if compared to the number of labor force in our country.

Al-Hakemi has bitterly complained of the evasion of some foreign companies operating in the field of oil in order to insure its labor force.

The Social Security is not able to convince those companies to adhere to the laws and bylaws. The Social Security has to insure employees in cases of death, job risks and the old age.

Even public hospitals don't show any adherence to insure the foreign cadres in accordance with the Yemeni law where hundreds of doctors and foreign female nurses are working.

"Insurance is a must on the part of companies owners. Those who employ more than five are not exempted from insurance whatever his or her nationality is," al-Hakemi said.

To insure the workers by their bosses means a partnership and the insurance money is not considered a state's revenue.

The social security institution is regarded as a confident insurer to regulate the different facets of interests in accordance with laws.

During the previous years, a part of these subscriptions in the treasury bills, banks deposits, along with other holding companies, banks and other mixed institutions have been invested.

Al-Hakemi has reiterated that insurance is a must for every one regardless of the sector they are working for. This includes, organizations, banks, and workshops. This right has been guaranteed by the international laws for the human rights and the constitution of the republic of Yemen as one of the important laws that should be taken into account.

reaching to one worker.

As for the investment companies and labs, al-Hakemi explained that a large number of sectors evade from insurance duties. More than 1060 institutions have been recorded in the capital secretariat and the number is on the rise.

Al-Hakemi has called on the embassies and international organizations operating in Yemen for the necessity to include Yemeni and non-Yemeni workers and retirees in our

organizations since 2000 and has repeated the same request in 2001.

Several embassies have positively responded to this call including the Italian Embassy, German Embassy, Algerian Embassy and the Japanese Embassy.

Up to this moment, other embassies and other legations haven't taken out insurance where a large number of Yemenis and non-Yemenis work for.

Regarding the significance of raising awareness of the significance of



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VACANCIES

Applications are invited from Yemeni Nationals for the following positions:

1. Finance and Logistics Assistants

Academic background & work experience required:-

- A Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration/Commerce with Accountancy as a subject; OR
- A Higher National Diploma in Accountancy; OR
- A recognized professional qualification in Accountancy equivalent to (a) or (b) above; and
- 2 years experience in Finance and Logistics related work.

2. Personnel and Administrative Assistants

Academic background expected:-

- A Bachelor's Degree in Human Resource Management; OR
- A Higher National Diploma in Human Resource management; OR
- A professional qualification in Human Resource Management equivalent to (a) or (b) above; and
- 2 years experience in Personnel and Administration related work.

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- Ability to work on Excel and Word software packages;
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- Should be of good health and moral character;
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An attractive remuneration package will be offered to the selected candidates. Applications should be sent under registered cover to reach the following address on or before 05.02.2003:-

Human Resources Unit,
United Nations Development Programme,
P. O. Box 551, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen



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Man with knives tries to enter U.N. Baghdad office

BAGHDAD, Jan 25 (Reuters) - A man wielding three knives tried to enter the building housing U.N. arms inspectors in Baghdad on Saturday but was stopped by guards, a U.N. spokesman in Baghdad said.

A Reuters cameraman and driver saw Iraqi guards and United Nations security stop the man, who appeared to be an Iraqi in his 20s and was holding the knives in his hands.

U.N. arms experts left the building shortly afterwards and headed for at least five sites suspected of producing weapons of mass destruction, Iraqi officials said.

Another person jumped into one of the inspectors' cars as it was leaving and tried to grab documents before Iraqi guards seized him.

"Two incidents took place today. A man...tried to force his way on to the (U.N.) premises. He was stopped by Iraqi police guarding the premises and U.N. security," U.N. spokesman Hiro Ueki told Reuters.

"He was carrying three knives and a piece of metal. He was handed to the (Iraqi) police," he added.

Ueki said he still had little information about the second incident but said a man tried to stop a convoy of U.N. cars carrying weapons inspectors outside the U.N. building.

This was the first such incident since weapons inspectors resumed their search for weapons of mass destruction on November 27 after a four-year absence. The inspections have aroused much resentment among Iraqis.

A chemical team from the U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) went to al-Qaqaa industrial complex, 60 km (40 miles) south of Baghdad. The site has been visited several times. A biological team went to the University of Qadisiya in Diwaniya

160 km (100 miles) south of Baghdad. An inspection team from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) went to offices of the state oil company in Mosul, 375 km (225 miles) north of Baghdad. Another nuclear team went to Khan Bani Saad around 20 km (12 miles) north of Baghdad.

An UNMOVIC multidisciplinary

team travelled to a missile site in al-Dujail, north of Baghdad.

The United States is counting on support from "at least a dozen" governments if it decides to attack Iraq without a fresh U.N. resolution, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said on Saturday.

Powell said these unnamed governments, like Washington, would prefer

a new U.N. Security Council resolution authorising the use of force against Iraq, but would not insist on that.

The inspectors are to deliver a report on their work to the U.N. Security Council on Monday, which could begin a countdown for a possible U.S. invasion to force Iraq to disarm.



A television grab shows an Iraqi man (2L) being taken away after he was wrestled to the ground by guards at the entrance to the U.N. building in Baghdad, Jan. 25. A man wielding three knives tried to enter the building housing U.N. arms inspectors in Baghdad on Saturday but was stopped by guards, a U.N. spokesman in Baghdad said. REUTERS

Shots fired from car in Kuwait, U.S. military says

KUWAIT, Jan 25 (Reuters) - U.S. troops in Kuwait heard shots fired from a car on a highway on Saturday but there were no reports of casualties, days after a gunman killed an American working for the U.S. army.

"There was a report that at 8:15 (0515 GMT) shots were fired from a moving vehicle," a U.S. military spokesman said. He said it was not yet clear what the shots had been fired at.

A Kuwaiti Interior Ministry official confirmed there were reports of gunshots but said it was unclear where they came from.

Kuwait is a key regional ally of Washington and likely to be the main launching pad for any land invasion of Iraq. But concerns about rising anti-American sentiment in the country have been fuelled by a series of attacks on U.S. citizens. On Tuesday a gunman opened fire with a Kalashnikov rifle at a car carrying two American civilians working at Camp Doha, the main U.S. military base in Kuwait. The ambush killed 46-year-old Michael Rene

Pouliot and injured his colleague David Caraway.

Kuwait's Interior Ministry said a 25-year-old Kuwaiti man, Sami Mohammed al-Mutairi, confessed to the attack. Officials said the man was a self-professed al Qaeda supporter and was being interrogated to determine whether he acted alone.

In November, a Kuwaiti policeman shot and seriously wounded two U.S. soldiers on a highway south of Kuwait City and the previous month two Kuwaitis attacked U.S. Marines training on an island, killing one. More than 15,000 U.S. troops are currently deployed in Kuwait and the number is increasing every week as the United States sends more forces to the Gulf.

The United States led Operation Desert Storm to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in 1991 after a seven-month occupation, and most Kuwaitis remain grateful.

But analysts say there is growing anti-American sentiment among some sections of the population, particularly over U.S. policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Two bombs hit Lebanon Palestinian refugee camp

AIN EL-HILWEH, Lebanon, Jan 25 (Reuters) - Two bombs ripped through a cafe and a shop in Lebanon's largest refugee camp on Saturday, Palestinian security sources said.

The sources said an unknown assailant threw a bomb at a cafe on the outskirts of the Ain el-Hilweh camp before dawn on Saturday, damaging the cafe and a car parked nearby. Shortly afterwards, another bomb ripped into a shop.

No one was injured in either attack, which the sources attributed to ongoing political tensions although neither shop

owner had any known political affiliations. The bombings were the latest in a string of bombs in the camp near the southern port city of Sidon, where tensions have Crun high since Islamic militants clashed with fighters loyal to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction in August, leaving three people dead.

Lebanese politicians hostile to some 350,000 Palestinian refugees registered in about a dozen camps across Lebanon point to Ain el-Hilweh as a haven for militants and organised crime.

Iraq says will fight with all means if attacked

NEW DELHI, Jan 25 (Reuters) - Iraq will use every method to fight anyone who invades without any justification, the speaker of the country's national assembly said on Saturday.

Saadoun Hammadi also dismissed the possibility of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein stepping down to avoid war. "This is wishful thinking and false propaganda," Hammadi told reporters in New Delhi.

"We are going to stand up and fight. We will use every method to inflict damage and casualties against those who invade our country without any justification."

Hammadi, who is in New Delhi for the Indian parliament's golden jubilee celebrations, said he hoped India as well as Iran, Turkey and other Arab countries would support Baghdad.

"We don't want this war but if the U.S. wages war we will have no alternative but to stand up and fight," he said.

United Nations weapons inspectors are due to deliver a much-anticipated report on Monday on Iraq's compliance with U.N. disarmament demands. Some commentators say the report could be the catalyst for the United States to go to war.

Washington says Iraq has weapons of mass destruction and must disclose them and provide evidence it has eliminated past programmes or face military action. Iraq says it has no such weapons.

Hammadi said Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction and the only aim of the United States was to control Iraq's huge oil reserves.

Violence surges in Gaza ahead of Israeli electionx

GAZA, Jan 25 (Reuters) - Israeli forces blew up bridges and battled Palestinian gunmen in the Gaza Strip on Saturday in swift response to a rocket strike on a town near Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's ranch days before Israel's general election.

In Cairo, Palestinian factions held landmark talks on Friday on an Egyptian proposal for a one-year unilateral ceasefire in attacks on Israelis, but chances of agreement in sessions expected to continue on Saturday and Sunday looked slim.

Constant violence in a 28-month-old Palestinian uprising for statehood has fuelled support in Israel for the tough security policies of Sharon's right-wing Likud party, forecast to romp to victory in Tuesday's parliamentary poll.

Hours after five rockets slammed into the Israeli town of Sderot, down the road from Sharon's Sycamore Ranch, an armoured force pushed into Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip. Police said a woman was slightly injured in the Sderot attack.

At least one Palestinian was killed and 20 Palestinians were hurt in fighting during the overnight Israeli incursion, local security sources said. An army spokesman said its forces pulled out of Beit Hanoun early on Saturday and suffered no casualties.

The soldiers blew up four bridges that connected Beit Hanoun to Gaza City to the south. In a statement, the army said the bridges were used by "terrorist cells" that launched the Qassam rockets.

"In the last year alone, more than 30 Qassam rockets and about 100 mortar bombs were fired from the

vicinity of the town," the army said in a statement.

Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip, built on Israeli-occupied land Palestinians want for a state, have been the main target of such attacks. The international community regards such settlements as illegal. Israel disputes this.

On Friday, troops guarding the northern West Bank Jewish settlement of Shavei Shomron killed a Palestinian man and a woman who the army said were members of a group that tried to ambush soldiers.

PALESTINIAN FACTIONS MEET

The first face-to-face meeting of factions ranging from Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah to Islamist and Marxist groups finally took place in Cairo after a two-day delay. They were expected to go on for at least two more days, Palestinian officials said.

A draft document drawn up by Egypt outlines a one-year unilateral ceasefire regarding attacks on Israelis but upholds the Palestinians' right to resist occupation and retain Arafat as leader.

"Several ideas have been tackled, especially the need to continue the resistance, and I believe tomorrow's (Saturday's) session will be very important and decisive for all factions as we will start discussing in depth one united political vision for all factions," said Abu Emad al-Rifaie of Islamic Jihad.

Islamic Jihad and the militant Hamas group, both dedicated to the destruction of the Jewish state, have

killed dozens of Israelis in suicide bombings during the Palestinian uprising.

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, founder of Hamas, said on Thursday his group would not accept a ceasefire until

Israel stopped its "killings and assaults" of Palestinians. Islamic Jihad has also rejected any ceasefire.

Only Fatah has endorsed the truce proposal so far. But Fatah's armed offshoot, the al-Aqsa Martyrs

Brigades, on Thursday rejected the unilateral ceasefire under discussion.

At least 1,788 Palestinians and 698 Israelis have been killed since the revolt began in September 2000 after peace talks stalled.



Palestinian relatives of Hasan Faiad, 19, killed by Israeli troops during clashes in Beit Hanoun north of Gaza City, mourn during his funeral in Jabalia refugee camp Jan. 25. Israeli troops blew up four bridges that connected Beit Hanoun to Gaza City to the south and battled Palestinian gunmen Saturday in swift response to a rocket strike on a town near Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's ranch. REUTERS

Iran hopes Iraq will abide by U.N. resolution

NEW DELHI, Jan 25 (Reuters) - Iranian President Mohammad Khatami said on Saturday he hoped Iraq would abide by a U.N. resolution on dismantling suspected weapons of mass destruction and that war could be averted in the Middle East.

"Undoubtedly, all eyes are looking towards Iraq... While we recommend to Iraq to abide by the U.N. resolution, at the same time we hope that there would be no war against Iraq," Khatami told reporters during a ceremonial welcome at the start of a state visit to India.

"I hope the present situation will be solved without any crisis in a peaceful way," he said at New Delhi's presidential palace.

Khatami is in India for a four-day visit during which he is expected to hold talks with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee on the looming threat of a U.S. attack on Iraq.

The Iranian leader will also be the guest of honour at India's annual Republic Day parade on Sunday, when nuclear-armed India will showcase its military might to mark the 1950 anniversary of the country's birth as a republic.

Khatami, who visited Pakistan in December, is also expected to discuss tensions on the subcontinent and seek to address Indian concerns about a proposed overland gas pipeline through Pakistan.

Tehran has proposed building a \$4 billion pipeline across Pakistan to India, but New Delhi's concerns about Pakistan remain a key obstacle.

United Nations weapons inspectors are due to deliver a much-anticipated report on Iraq's compliance with U.N. disarmament demands on Monday, which some commentators say could be the catalyst for the United States to go to war.

Washington says Iraq has weapons of mass destruction and must disclose them and provide evidence it has eliminated past programmes or face military action. Iraq says it has no such weapons.



Iranian President Mohammad Khatami.
REUTERS

U.S. President George W. Bush included Iran, Iraq and North Korea in an "axis of evil", nations he has said were bent upon developing weapons of mass destruction and assisting terrorists.

But Iran is no friend of Iraq. The two countries fought an eight-year war in the 1980s in which one million people died. Hostilities ended in 1988 but the two neighbours have still not signed a peace treaty.

Tehran is also a sworn enemy of the United States, which it accuses of backing Iraq in the war against Iran to undermine the Islamic Republic.

Khatami said the world was passing through a difficult time.

"I believe the present situation in the world is not a very good one... Unfortunately, the world today has been scarred by terrorism," he said.

"Unfortunately, misuse of the present situation to create an environment of war has brought a lot of problems for our world."

Khatami said he hoped better ties between India and Iran would help usher in peace in the region.

"The relationship between Iran and India could be beneficial for regional and international peace and also the development of the region," he said.

Germany's Fischer says Iraq has no room for tactics

CAIRO, Jan 25 (Reuters) - German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer said on Saturday that Iraq had no room to manoeuvre in its dealings with U.N. weapons inspectors if it wanted to avert war and must cooperate fully.

"It is of utmost importance that the government in Baghdad understands how serious the situation is, that there is no room for tactics or manoeuvring," Fischer told reporters after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo.

"The full cooperation with the inspectors is the condition that the door to a peaceful solution will not be closed," he said at a joint news conference with Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher.

Egypt, like Germany, opposes military strikes on Iraq, saying it would destabilise an already volatile region



Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak (R) meets German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer in Cairo Jan. 25. Fischer is on a regional tour for talks with Arab leaders on the Iraq Crisis and efforts to avert possible U.S.-led strikes on the Arab state.
REUTERS

but it has also called on Iraq to cooperate with the inspectors.

Fischer said the Egyptian president and foreign minister were expected to visit Germany in mid-February as part of ongoing contacts about the crisis.

Asked whether he thought war was inevitable, Maher said: "Nothing is inevitable. The desire of the whole world is to find a peaceful solution. Nobody would go to war lightly." Fischer, who has angrily rejected U.S. criticism that Germany and France were isolated in Europe in their efforts to avoid war in Iraq, has said such a conflict would create tremendous risks of instability everywhere in the region.

He has already consulted the foreign ministers of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria and Turkey who he met in Istanbul on Thursday to discuss the crisis over Iraq.

Seydou Diarra named Ivory Coast PM at summit-source

PARIS, Jan 25 (Reuters) - Seydou Diarra has been named new prime minister of Ivory Coast as part of a peace deal to end a four-month civil war, a source close to a conference of West African leaders near Paris said on Saturday.

Diarra was prime minister during military rule from 1999 to 2000, and headed a reconciliation forum set up by President Laurent Gbagbo to try to defuse tensions in the country.

The peace plan would keep Gbagbo in office but force him to share power with the new prime minister, delegates at the closed-door talks have said.

A French source at the summit said that Gbagbo had accepted the peace deal worked out by rival Ivorian factions,



French President Jacques Chirac (L), UN General Secretary Kofi Annan (C) and Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo (R) attend the Ivory Coast Conference of Chief of States in Paris Jan. 25.
REUTERS

including Diarra's appointment.

"The accord was considered acceptable by President Gbagbo and the other Ivorian forces," said the source in the French delegation.

The plan also urges the creation of an international surveillance committee to ensure the accord is respected. Such a body could lessen the burden for former colonial power France, which has put 2,500 troops into Ivory Coast to maintain a ceasefire.

French President Jacques Chirac told the summit on Saturday the peace plan had to have support throughout the country, racked by fighting that has killed hundreds and displaced up to a million people since a failed September 19 coup.

Tender No. (1), 2003

For import, checking, handing over and guaranteeing digital TV video sets



The Public Radio & Television Corporation calls upon specialized manufacturing companies to check, hand over and guarantee digital TV video sets.

All specialized manufacturing companies interested in this tender should proceed to the corporation's headquarter in Sana'a-Engineering sector-Projects General Authority, near the Ministry of Health to receive a copy of the tender's documents after paying an amount of USD 300 nonrefundable.

In the case of the desire to receive the documents by mail, an extra one hundred US dollar should be paid by mail along with administrative costs.

Tender documents include invitation for the tender, general conditions and instructions to the bidders, amount of work, contract conditions, technical specifications, and documents that need to be attached with the bid.

Envelopes of bids are scheduled to open at the corporation's headquarter at 11:00 clock on February 22, 2003.

Bids received after 11:00 O'clock, February 22, 2003, will not be considered.

Address

Republic Of Yemen
Sana'a, Al-Hasaba, beside the Ministry of Public Health & Population,
PO. Box: 2182
Tel: 00967 1 230654
Fax: 00967 1 230761
Email: ycrtv@y.net.ye



JOB OPPORTUNITY

Yemen Hunt Oil Company is currently seeking experienced personnel to work on "FSO SAFER". The successful candidate will be required to perform these tasks at the ship on a rotational schedule (28 days on / 28 days off).

Machinist

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- Must have completed City and Guilds or Equivalent.
- Must have at least 5 years experience on Ships, Shipyards or Stream Plants including boilers steam turbines and crude oil piping and valves.
- Must be able to use workshop tools and equipment (e.g. Lathe and Threading Machines, etc.)
- Must be able to work in a team and alone as instructed by the Supervisor.
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To work on the FSO SAFER to carry out overhauls to pumps (steam or electrical), motorized hydraulic, air or manual operated valves, Steam Turbines, Compressors etc. and to use Lathes to fabricate required spares if needed.

All Candidates must be YEMENI NATIONALS

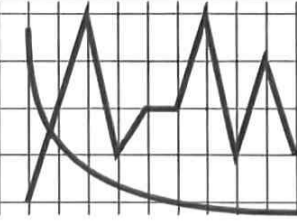
Deadline for the application: **January 31, 2003.**

If you meet the above requirements, please forward your resume only to:

YEMEN HUNT OIL COMPANY
Attn: Human Resources Manager
P. O. Box 481
Or
Fax: 1-416 898
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

Please do not phone us. We will call you for an interview if you are a successful candidate.

YT Business



The Road Ahead

Flexible thinking

BY RAIDAN A. AL-SAQQAF
r_saqqaf@hotmail.com

One week ago, I was travelling from Sana'a to Aden by car. Through the highway, suddenly I came across an animal intending to cross the road. And in the next insight the animal catches sight of my fast incoming vehicle, in a split of a second the poor animal got paralyzed and lowered its head and charged my vehicle head-on. The sudden apparition of my car must have paralyzed the animal's judgment, causing it to perversely to rush into the fatal direction whereas it could've escaped with seconds to spare.

The same thing happens to people when they experience a similar kind of mental paralysis; they are only able to see a very limited number of options despite the many alternatives available. The more severe the pressure and the more urgently a broader view is needed; the more dangerously their mental view seems to narrow down, and the list of options they consider shortens up, especially when it comes to a business executive who is obsessed with the 'all of nothing' fallacy.

There is no business in the world that operates according to the clear-cut, black or white principle of the binary system. In fact business operate according to perceiving and discovering areas for intelligent choice making among various business options, and in turn choose the best courses of action for the organization to take. All in order to ensure ultimate success and avoid the worst that can happen through understanding the full range of alternatives and constantly weighting the costs and benefits of each one.

Considering different alternatives require posing a number of 'what if' questions to find out the different possibilities, for example if the situation was such and such, what would be our best course of action? And what are the different alternatives? To which extent can tolerate such and such?

But still, sometimes business executives do not push their thinking to the full flex and do not consider all the alternatives seriously. This can be the result of the lack of any sense of entrepreneurial skills or competitive urgency, and these are two precisely qualities needed for success in all times. In addition to that, flexible thinking in business allows breaking out of the limited scope of vision that entrapped that animal on the highway. It also must be backed up by the daily use of imagination and by constant logical thinking and thought processing.

Endnote: success won't come unbidden and unplanned, and the process of planning success includes lots and lots logical and flexible thinking in order to include and consider all the different alternatives a business has. In other words it is flexible thinking that allows the scope of success to increase through providing more and more alternatives.

Mr. Wadee Saif Ahmad, Director for the Cleanliness and Improvement Fund in Hodeidah to Yemen Times:

"Cleanliness campaigns in full swing"

BY IMAD AL-SAQQAF
YEMEN TIMES STAFF
TAIZ BUREAU CHIEF

Historic references have indicated that the name of Hodeidah originated from an old woman's name "Hadeedah". The aged woman used to live in Bab Mushref, the second largest gate of the city, and it is she who gave this important Yemeni coastal city its name.

But Hodeidah City today does not resemble old age or senility. The city has become a young and energetic looking city resembling an active and strategic harbor on the Red Sea. But at the same time, the city was also able to preserve its historical significance.

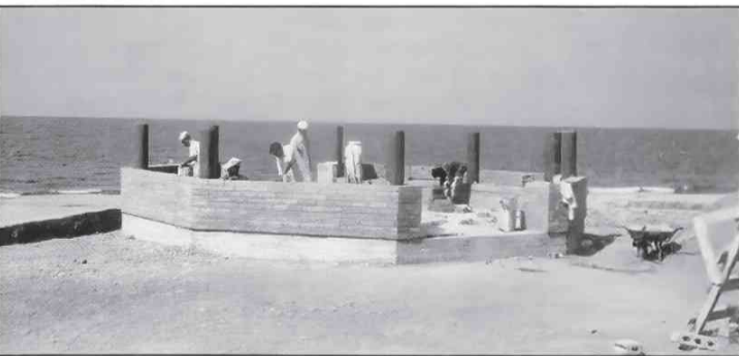
However, Hodeidah City faced a challenge after unification due to the emergence of another strong competitor: Aden, which was declared as a commercial and industrial capital of Yemen.

Three years ago, I visited Hodeidah and found that there wasn't much commercial or social activity. All I found was bumpy roads filled with rubbish and waste materials scattered almost every you go in the city. Well, I realized that the 'old woman' name did not come from nowhere then.

Last week, however, I revisited Hodeidah City. But this time it was a much brighter image. I saw the old woman turning into a young beautiful bride again. I have found the city healthier and younger. The city seemed full of energy and enthusiasm.

I could finally breathe fresh air in Hodeidah after motorbike smog would fill the city's atmosphere. I could see a city beautifully decorated with trees and green parks.

I have been deeply impressed by such beauty and therefore I believe that it deserves the title "2002 most beautiful Yemeni city". I also believe that the efforts that its governor has exerted to turn it to what it is today entitle him to the "2002 most distinguished governor" title. It is not a complement; it is truly an amazing difference.



Erection of a building on shore

Hodeidah's streets today are clean and organized. Sightseers and visitors who have been to Hodeidah in the past will notice that the city has now an incomparable beauty.

Tourist attractions are everywhere you go. You find trees, green grasses, foun-

tains, and many other features that you would consider necessary for a tourist city.

This can be attributed to the strenuous efforts exerted by its governor, Mr. Mohammed Saleh Shamlan and the Executive Manager in the governorate, Mr. Wadee Saif Ahmad who is an MA graduate in Agriculture from the Alexandria University. He is now appointed as the Director for the Cleanliness and Improvement Fund.

The fund is also run by the information center in Hodeidah governorate which aims basically at coordinating joint activities of all Hodeidah governorate districts.

It is responsible for collecting information of the different activities happening all over the governorate and establishing a very strong infrastructure for development in all districts of the Hodeidah governorate.

Mr. Imad Al-Saqqaf, Yemen Times Taiz/Hodeidah Bureau Chief met with Mr.



Mr. Wadee Saif Ahmad

- tifying some of the city's streets.
- 6- Renewing and lighting some of city streets.
 - 7- Establishing a temporary shed for the fish market.
- The total cost for these projects have been totaled YR. 167,272,600.

tence in the past. People felt embarrassed to talk about cleaning. They could see with their own eyes heaps of rubbish and waste scattered everywhere in street pavements without doing anything about it thinking that it is the sole responsibility of the state. But today, we have shown them that talking about cleanliness is nothing to be ashamed of and that it is a joint responsibility of citizens and government. We should feel proud of what has been achieved so far.

Q: How do you assess the mechanisms of the cleanliness project?

A: I will not assess in this matter. Leaderships in the governorate along with the public will assess our achievements.

Frankly speaking, we have spent four months working with out-of-date cleaning machines and equipment. Supported by the governor of the city, cleaning machines and equipment have been provided.

campaign will focus on removing the solid waste materials and beautifying the city using all available means.

Q: What are your future plans?

A: We are greatly ambitious to achieve the future plans in the context of:

Firstly, concerning the cleanliness campaign, which would include:

- a. Allocating a new distant site for waste material. This site will be at least 13 km away from the city.
- b. Recycling waste material. Preparations are underway to erect a mini plant for recycling and buying recycling machines, and equipment for this matter.
- c. Purchasing new equipment for the waste material spot.
- d. Rehabilitating and repairing the project's workshop.
- e. Improving the previous mechanisms of the cleanliness project.



Before facelift



After facelift

Wadee Saif, the Executive Manager of the fund, and filed the following interview.

Q: When was the cleanliness fund established? What are the projects that have been achieved so far?

A: The fund was established in 1999 by republican decree no. (20) to form the Cleanliness and Improvement Funds to enhance cities.

The fund's active projects can be summarized in the following:

- 1- Erecting the Victory Arch, (Qaws Annasr).

Q: To what extent has the cleanliness law been enforced and how have the concerned bodies reacted to make the fund a success?

A: The cleanliness law hasn't been fully enforced until the beginning of the last quarter of the year 2002.

After its transference to a new neighborhood, the fund's staff along with the concerned bodies have discussed and reviewed some vital matters related to the law.

As a matter of fact, the fund's activities have begun to be felt and some vital projects have been established in this regard.

In addition to this, projects are being implemented in full swing. This can be detected through the established work related to beautifying the city through paving streets, construct flagstones, and lighting parks and streets.

Besides, fountains have been repaired and the street cleaners have started working in acceptable costumes.

Q: In your point of view, how can the media play a positive role in raising awareness of cleanliness towards their cities?

A: Undoubtedly, the media has a vital role to play in terms of raising awareness of the importance of cleanliness among the public. It is of great significance to keep their cities clean and organized.

Cleanliness campaigns were nonexis-

ting. It is saddening to see that some people act irresponsibly towards the cleanliness workers, who have started their work. Those people are somewhat still unaware of the great importance of keeping their cities clean.

Q: How do you assess the cleanliness campaign in the historical city of Zabeed?

A: We are at the cleanliness fund fully aware of the importance of preserving the beautiful facet of the ancient Zabeed City which will soon be restored.

We are entirely dependent on the positive reactions and efforts made by the governor of the city. The duty of this has been assigned to Mr. Mohammed Abdulwasa'e who will lead the cleanliness campaign in the city of Zabeed. The Zabeed cleanliness

- f. Activating the awareness sections and environment guidance.
- g. Training the cleanliness cadres.

Secondly, concerning the technical department which is related to establishing projects, planting trees, and lightening, these are the cleanliness projects which are to be implemented this year:

- a. Paving roads in the context of building and expanding streets, building car parks, and repairing old streets.
- b. Adding flagstones to street pavements, establishing a nursery project and irrigation networks and lighting streets.
- c. Launching new public parks, and other important projects.

The overall cost of those proposed projects is around YR. 80,865,500.



Renovation complete in Duraimi St.

Yemeni-Syrian trade relations

Steady progress

BY MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemen-Syrian political and economic relations are witnessing steady development, as convergence of the two countries' vision of the region's events has enhanced their orientation towards development of cooperation. The two countries have held regular meetings of the Higher Joint Committee (HJC) chaired by both countries' prime ministers.

In the Yemeni-Syrian Higher Joint

Committee meeting held in Damascus on 26 January a number of projects and agreements have been ratified in addition to discussion of cooperation in trade, technical and higher education, and public health and population fields.

The Higher Joint Committee has drawn up practical mechanisms for activating already signed agreements and enhancing the work of the Yemeni-Syrian businessmen council. This council will be playing a future role in developing investment partnership and utilization of existing investment opportunities in the way contributing to strengthening confidence

among the Syrian and Yemeni businessmen.

Meetings of the HJC in Damascus came as a result of its previous meetings for evaluation of implementation of agreements concluded last year, among which was the agreement on avoiding taxes dualism. The two countries signed agreements on exchange of taxation information to combat tax evasion and to support and develop cooperation between the two countries in all fields. And in order to develop trade relations the two countries have joined the countries that had in 2002 declared the establishment of

the Arab Union of Sea Navigation in Alexandria for the purpose of creating coordination among those countries in sea transport and its services in the face of world groupings. Holding of three Syrian trade fairs in Sanaa and Aden can be an example on the growth of Yemeni-Syrian trade relations. In September 2002 two Syrian fairs were held in Sanaa for Syrian various products in which 25 companies had participated. A third Syrian trade fair was held in Aden on 29 May 2002 in which 60 companies took part. Those Syrian trade fairs are considered a good beginning for consolidating the two coun-

tries' trade exchange in context of cementing Arab countries trade and economic relations among their markets. But the balance of trade is still tilted to Syrian products exported to Yemen by 75%.

It is to be noted that the volume of trade exchange between Yemen and Arab countries has so far amounted to YR 194.80 billion. The value of Yemen's exports to Arab markets have reached to YR 34.40 billion. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for increasing Yemeni exports to Syria in the trend for realizing balance in the balance of trade between the two countries.

Words of Wisdom



Total neglect and carelessness now prevails at all levels of society. Someone doesn't do his/her job - who cares? Someone throws his garbage on the street - who cares? Someone manhandles a child or a woman - who cares? Someone doesn't show up for work - who cares? Someone breaks the traffic light - who cares?

There is a near-total collapse of law and order. Nobody can uphold the law, unless of course, the person who suffers from an incident or a behavior is a strong person, in which case, he will uphold the law.

Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, (1951-1999)
Founder of Yemen Times

OUR OPINION
Lessons from World War II

Last week, I was touched deeply by a video that was shown to guests from embassies, government, and other personalities from Yemen. The video was shown on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Franco-German Elysée Friendship Treaty. It started with clips showing the catastrophic results of World War II. The images were horrific and saddening. Fifty million Europeans died directly because of the war, fifty million were on the move, and millions of others suffered the repercussions of the devastating war.

Germany was reduced to rubble, buildings demolished, infrastructures destroyed, and the essence of a comfortable life assassinated. You could see Europeans walking barefooted carrying their clothes on their backs on unpaved dirty streets. You could see those Europeans in their farms with the use of very primitive farming techniques using donkeys and bulls. I recalled my own village when we moved from the stage of using bulls for farming purposes to tractors more than a decade ago. I wondered, "were they in more devastating conditions than those we are living in today?" I guess the answer is "Yes!"

Europeans, specifically Germans following the war, lived a period of agony, poverty and devastation, similar to that which is being lived in some African countries today. There was shortage of food, medicine, and basic human needs. They turned to their farms to make a living and bring bread to the table. They started planting seeds again, but those seeds signaled a new beginning, they were the seeds of modern Germany.

What did Germans do? Did they sit handfolded and curse their bad luck for having a maniac dictator ruling their country, or did they lie down and await death?

What they did was give rebirth to a new more powerful Germany; A Germany that stood against the odds in defending the right to exist and build a modern and developed nation.

The same applies to Japan following the nuclear bombs blasts in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan today stands as a super economic power in the world just as Germany stands as the super economic power of Europe.

The destruction and devastation inflicted on the countries that had lost World War II did not cause them to lose hope and surrender, but to rebuild and look to the future.

Yemen did not go through such devastation, and does not have to rebuild itself like those countries. Why then do we feel so desperate and helpless in developing our country?

I think we have much to learn from World War II, but more importantly, we need to learn from the reconstruction period that followed it.

The Germans and the Japanese were not only able to make their countries stand on their feet again, but they also were able to rise higher than expected and become two of the most economically powerful countries in the world.

If Germans and Japanese can do it, why can't we?

The Editor

Terrorism: we all pay



By ISMAEL AL-GHABRY
i.gabri@hotmail.com

Terrorism is an awful crime that is the result of extremism and fanatic beliefs. It so happens that a bunch of unhealthy souls have spread their venom into the Yemeni society, harming the good interests of the country and going against the true measures and commands of Islam. Yet ironically, they claim that they are the closest to it.

In the economical field, according to

the latest official statistics, the amount of loss has reached \$1.8 billion and \$446 million, the value of investment projects frozen because of terrorism.

Also international insurance companies have enforced a great fee reaching 300 per cent on ships and marine crafts that enter Yemeni ports, indirectly making those ships change their path and landing in neighboring ports.

This creates a loss of more than \$25 million monthly for the country. This money could have been used to build, roads, hospitals and schools.

There was the attack on the American navy ship USS Cole in Aden in 2000, and the attack on the oil tanker Limburg this past October, passing by

all the destructive acts and targeting companies and oil pipes explosions.

And finally there was last weeks tragic incidents of the assassination of YSP general secretary Jarallah Omar in Sana'a and the three Americans killed at Jibla Hospital.

All these terrorist acts call for vital and immediate responses from the authorities and to refer to sense and logic when dealing with such sensitive situations.

We need to take a stand against these social diseases. This is a national and patriotic duty for all in order to finally reproduce the happy Yemen with all the good will and kind faces of its people.

A Yemeni view from the USA

By ABDO ZANDANI*
azandan@nycoe.net

The news of the three U.S. citizens killed in Jibla, Yemen is tragic loss. They were providing humanitarian assistance to the poor and needy.

Yemeni-Americans from the area mourn their loss. My uncle tells me that my aunts were treated by them. My cousin's wife said she remembers Kathy and her endless kindness. They charged very little if you had money or treated the sick for free if they could not afford it.

The news from Jibla tells similar stories of how William, Kathy, and Martha helped the poor the sick and the needy. A resident of Jibla spoke to Dr. Myers treating her when she was confined to bed for months to avoid miscarriage. She said, "Every day, she looked after me; she used to come to my house, until

I was able to stand and walk without endangering my pregnancy."

The stories from both sides of the ocean are the same. Yemeni Americans living in Brooklyn and Yemenis in Ibb Province recall similar experiences. Their death at the hand of a deranged man will discourage others like them from traveling to Yemen to assist those in need.

The view on this side of the ocean is that Yemen is loosely controlled and law and order beyond the major cities is non-existent. Guns are readily available and government control in remote provinces is very weak. Consequently, the country is a haven for terrorists linked to al-Qaeda.

Clearly, the central government needs to establish law and order across the country if it is to rid itself of terrorists linked to al-Qaeda. It needs to enact gun control legislations that will control the flow of guns and crack down on black markets that peddle guns and

heavy artillery. It needs to persuade its citizens to surrender their guns and in return the government would provide security in remote areas.

Humanitarian organizations, companies wishing to do business, and tourists will be hesitant to travel to Yemen as long as lawlessness is rampant and government control is non existence beyond city lines.

This is the view from abroad. It is sad but true. It is the hope of this author that this perspective will slowly change for the better, to a Yemen that is secure and not conducive for a deranged man to walk into a hospital and kill three U.S. citizens who have devoted their lives to providing help and assistance to the needy.

* Mr. Abdo Zandani is the Information Technology Director of the Community School District 17 in Brooklyn, New York

Inspiration from President Saleh



By MOHAMMED AL-MASANI

The president's speech during the conference for Interior Ministry leaders Jan. 6 to 8 had a clear vision in which he addressed the opposition and invited all of Yemen's citizens to stand abreast to face the challenges.

He, on one hand, manifested the wisdom of authority, that is to act and impose laws and prevent crimes from happening.

On the other hand he pointed out that his invitation to unite together does not change the idea of participation in authority ensuring that the participation only comes through vote boxes and getting

people's trust.

So the opposition really needs to get the point of the president speech — to address the public instead of mistrusting the participation in the ruling government — and to start to adopt practical programs related to raise awareness among the people about their rights and assist them to get developed and improved through parties adoption for developmental programs according to their capabilities or through their merged associations.

The president insisted on first getting people's trust which is undoubtedly the only way to that the opposition has to take if they want the power and implement their programs.

In all cases, it is supposed to hold strongly all the religious and national values and principles in favor of the country,

far from the conspiracies and exchanges and accusations against each other. This certainly serves the external enemy who would invest these conspiracies to err discourse among Yemeni people.

Finally, let's make the president our reference that is respectable by all.

I am not adopting the authority' point of view but I invite the opposition to change the way they work into adopting the development instead and getting closer to people, not through the newspaper but through reality.

The country is the responsibility of all the authority and opposition. Let's take Dr. Abdul Aziz al-Saqqaf's unique experience. A lot of people miss him. He was a pioneering example in opposition and encouraged the development of participation and giving advice as well.

Let's seek understanding

S. ALLEN
PrincipalInvestigator@hotmail.com

I read with horror today the views of several Americans who had taken the time to write you regarding recent political events. Please allow me a moment to state an alternate opinion.

In this conflict there is obviously two opposite sides, but there is also a middle and this is where we must place our efforts. There will always be the political fringe and radical zealots who have nothing but hate in their hearts. But on this earth, we are all brothers and sisters, and we will get nowhere with violent words and deeds.

It seems to me the only way out of this very difficult dilemma is to try to bring those with moderate views closer together. It is important for Americans and Muslims alike to consider the other's viewpoints.

For example, I think it is important for Americans to hear exactly the concerns of the Muslims in this world. I think it is important for us to address their concerns and move towards a more acceptable foreign policy. American children and Muslim children all deserve a right to grow up in a society where they are loved and respected, where they have food, and water, and an education. Deep down, I believe, we all want the same things.

But this must happen through negotiation, for what can follow violence but retaliation?

It is important for Yemenis and Americans and all the citizens of the world to find our middle ground. If we give an equal voice to negotiation, and to those who would consider the other's viewpoints, we can advance peace on this planet most effectively. For example, I go online daily to foreign newspapers to get the viewpoints I cannot in local newspapers. I encourage you and your readers to do the same. We must begin to see each other not as enemies but as brothers and sisters. I am not Satan, and nor are you. We are all children searching for hope.

COMMON SENSE



By Hassan Al-Haifi

What will our children be doing?

“What is worrying you dad?” Raouf said to his father as they were eating breakfast.

“Your father was not pleased with your grades”, his mother answered trying to help her husband out in response to their son.

“But I still am the first in the class!” Raouf pointed out proudly.

“Your father never thinks in relative terms. He always looks towards the optimum.” The mother always had a knack for reading her husband's mind.

“What optimum?”, the father was ready to speak his mind, “These days, the government has pointed out that the only optimum that exists is the amount of taxes it can bleed out of the poor citizen without giving anything back in return. Even the basic service of education is subject to distortions and inefficiency beyond description.”

“But at least we have taxation with representation”, joked Raouf.

The father was not going to buy that as he sat reading the paper and gulping down his morning coffee: “With the representation we have today in Parliament, you are better off placing your bets on a pack of monkeys looking over your government. When have you heard the government being accountable for all its inefficiencies and corruption that exists within its corridors?”

“But my dear, democracy is not an overnight process; it takes a few generations to get it to be ingrained within the mind set of the governed and the government”. The mother had to show that you can't have everything all at once.

The father was now ready to give a discourse on what is eating at his mind: “Look, my dear, I cannot see where you find the excuses for the fumbling of the government so easily. There is no point in saying we have democracy, when we know that no matter how the elections come out we will still see the same faces running the show with the ‘business as usual’ attitude we have been seeing now for two generations. Just look at the education sector. We have yet to see any improvement in the most important sector that affects to only our lives, but the lives of the generations to come. Look at the optimum we are seeing in Raouf. If you ask him how many Arab states have elected Parliaments, he will tell you that they never mentioned that in his social studies class! If you ask him who invented the microscope, he will tell you that they have not had East Asian History yet! I am not asking for the optimum anymore. I am just asking for very basic fundamentals in the education system and in every sector of our uncoordinated society. Do you know how much corruption plagues the education sector? Have you ever heard Parliament discuss the reasons for this serious flaw in government services? No, the fact is that government has become a playground for opportunists to enjoy as they please, while they bleed its coffers, not worrying about facing any accountability. My dear, your son is in the first year of secondary school and he does not know who invented the microscope, and he is the first rank in his class! How can we go to sleep with such clear signs of failure in the education system?”

“But dad, I have no intention of being a bacteriologist”, reported Raouf to his disappointed father.

You probably will not make it to be a brick layer, with the educational system we have. How many children really know what they want to be? There is no clear direction that our educational system goes by to guide our children as to their future. In fact for all intents and purposes, I can say that the output of our education comes down to a few literates, who find that they cannot find anything worthwhile to read, unless they go to the internet. But then how many can afford to have such a luxury? Even those who can afford it are unable to look for the right avenues that will lay the foundations for their future. Therefore, can you please tell me what our son is going to turn out to be when he finishes his high school? Not even your hair-dresser knows for sure!”

Letters to the Editor

Jarallah's assassination
The brief reference to the assassination of Comrade Jarallah Omar highlights the perverse logic of the sectarian groups responsible for the spate of killings in Yemen. Jarallah Omar a leader in the Yemeni Socialist Party was speaking as a guest of the main Islamic Party Islah, when he was murdered. At a time when anti-imperialists of the Arab/ Islamic world and beyond, are uniting against the US and UK policy, who benefits from silencing debate between Islamists and socialists?

The obvious answer the Western powers, brings us back to the fact that these

groups were originally nurtured by US/ UK imperialism to destroy the Soviet Union, by fermenting conflict between socialists and Islamists. We need to unite as never before to ensure the imperialist hegemony does not prevail.

Nasser Al Mashadi
boycottzionism@hotmail.com

Jarallah assassination remembered

First of all, I would like to convey my condolences to the family and the relatives of Mr. Jarallah Omar in particular; in general, my heart goes also to all peace-loving people of “Yemen Felix.”
Whoever did it, and who-

ever conspired against him, and whoever wanted him dead, now that he is gone: Will no one tell me, if his death serves anyone's political gains? Do his shoes fit the killers' feet? Although it proves out to be a cruel irony, history teaches us that, men who fought for noble causes, men that preached non-violence, have at last fallen victim to blood-thirsty criminals! What a loss! What a pain! What a sorrow! Look, Mr. Omar is not there anymore! Because of the loss of such a great man, Yemen became poorer a republic than ever before!

I am fed up of assassinations, of senseless fighting, of tribal feuds, of lawless-

Letters to the Editor

your brother. A mourning brother of yours.

I wish the people of Yemen long live and many years of happiness. Wish you a happy new year! It is all the best from sincerely yours,

A. M. Yuusuf
Aflax@t-online.de

Moments of grief

First of all, I would like to thank Yemen Times and its Editor-in-Chief for their matchless efforts.

We are indeed living days of grief and sorrow these days. What I have learned from your paper is that one should devote himself to serve ones country and its people. But, I was truly shocked when I found that

some Yemeni people refused to be cooperative and are not proud of their country. Instead of honoring their country and people, they started killing the innocent! It is something unimaginable.
I along with many others was also astonished to learn that Mr. Jarallah Omar was assassinated. In such tough conditions, all we can do is pray for his soul and stress that he will forever stay in our mind and heart.
Alyafee Yafee
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More letters on Page 16

YEMEN TIMES
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Skeptical about a unilateral U.S. invasion War can be stopped

BY STEPHEN ZUNES*

Despite increased preparation for war, there is a growing perception that a U.S. invasion of Iraq can be stopped.

There is little question that were it not for the anti-war movement, the United States would have gone to war against Iraq already. It was the strength of opposition to plans for a unilateral U.S. invasion that forced the Bush administration to go to the UN in the first place. So far, Iraqi compliance with the United Nations weapons inspectors has made it extremely difficult for the administration to proceed with its war plans.

Iraq should do some thing

UN Security Council resolution 1441—written by and pushed through by the United States to strengthen the power of UN inspections and weaken the ability of Iraq to evade them—was modified before passage so that military action to enforce the resolution is possible only with explicit Security Council authorization. In order for such authorization to go forward, Iraq would have to do something rather brazen and stupid which—while it certainly cannot be ruled out—has thus far forced a reluctant Saddam Hussein to cooperate with the new inspections regime.

This does not mean that the Bush administration—which has repeatedly shown its contempt for international law—would not proceed with an invasion anyway. In October, the U.S. Congress, with support of both the Republican and Democratic leadership, granted President Bush the authority to invade Iraq without UN Security Council authorization. This war resolution was illegal, however, since such an invasion would violate the United Nations Charter, which was signed and

ratified by the United States; Article VI of the U.S. Constitution declares such international treaties as “supreme law.”

The Bush administration has demonstrated, however, that it does not have great respect for the Constitution either. What, then, might be able to stop an invasion?

Again, it would be the strength of anti-war opposition.

Opposing the war

Already, a number of Democrats who supported the war resolution and then saw their party lose miserably in the November elections, are now arguing against a rush to war. Among their fears is that a resurgent and clearly anti-war Green Party could capture enough liberal votes to cause the Democrats’ defeat in the 2004 election.

Some top military brass and career officials in the Department of Defense are quietly but firmly expressing their opposition to the war, recognizing that an invasion of Iraq would be the most complicated and bloody U.S. military operation since Vietnam. This, in turn, would strengthen anti-war opposition further. The Vietnam War taught the U.S. military that it should not fight in any major war without the backing of the majority of the American public. Currently, the U.S. military is one of the most respected institutions in America. It does not want to go back to the days when military recruiters could not even show up on college campuses without demonstrations breaking out. As military officials, they will certainly obey the orders of their commander-in-chief if called into combat. However, the more anti-war forces grow, the greater the U.S. military will be concerned about its own institutional self-preservation.

The intelligence wing of the Central Intelligence Agency—unlike the operations wing—is composed largely of professionals whose concerns are less

ideological. They are focused instead on how to protect American security. CIA cost/benefit analyses have shown that a U.S. invasion of Iraq would threaten rather than protect American interests.

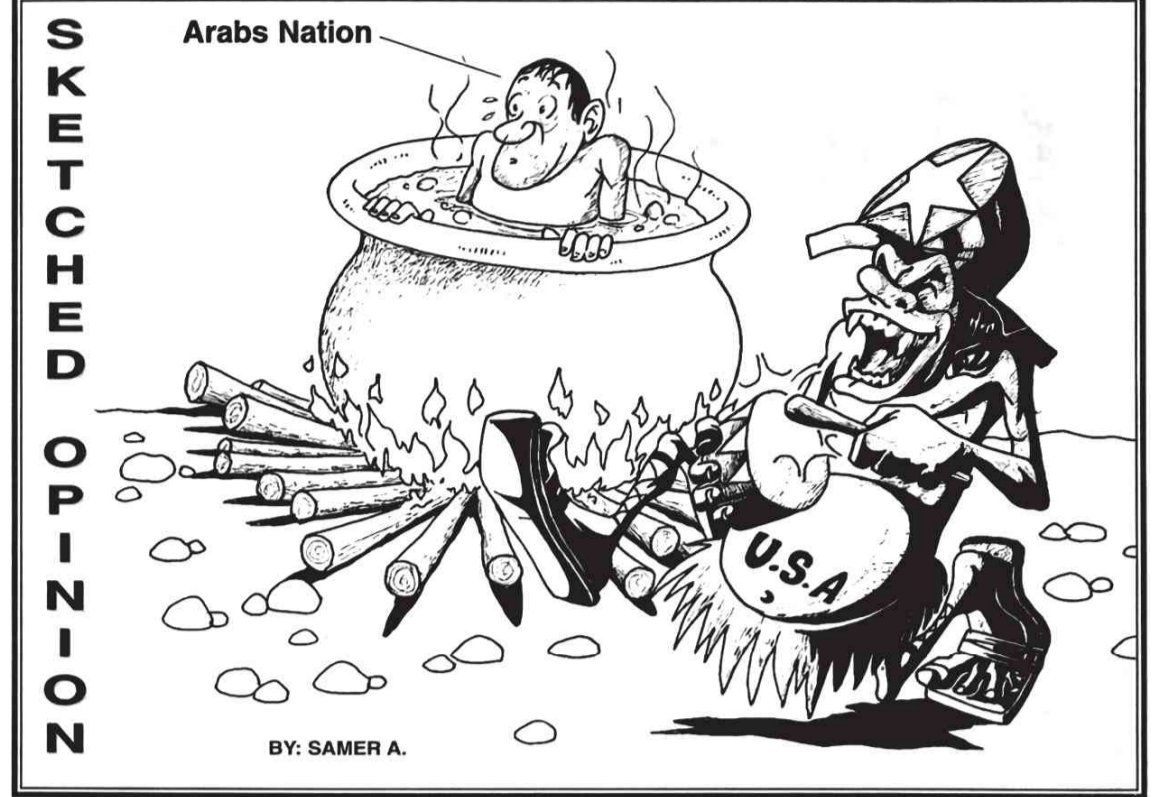
Ironic situation

In effect, we have the ironic situation where the peace movement finds some of its most significant allies are the Pentagon and the CIA. These very influential actors in foreign policy decisionmaking could potentially allow cooler heads to prevail. Indeed, they are joined in their opposition by top foreign and defense policy officials from former Republican administrations, including Lawrence Eagleburger, Brent Scowcroft, and retired General Anthony Zinni.

There is also the international factor: While a number of America’s key European allies are willing to grant rights to use bases on their soil for re-supply and to provide other logistical assistance for war against Iraq in the event of United Nations authorization, they are skeptical about a unilateral U.S. invasion. Public opinion polls in Europe show scant support for U.S. military action without UN authorization.

In the U.S., public opinion polls have consistently shown that while the majority of Americans support a U.S. invasion of Iraq to topple Saddam Hussein, only a minority support a war without authorization from the United Nations or active participation of allied militaries, or one that results in high American casualties. Since all three of these appear very likely, it is not unreasonable to assert that the majority of the American public opposes the Bush administration’s plans to unilaterally launch a pre-emptive invasion of Iraq. Indeed, polls have shown support for war declining.

Anti-war expressed largely



The anti-war movement is strong and is growing. Already, the demonstrations against a U.S. invasion of Iraq—which hasn’t yet happened—have been larger than those against the Vietnam War during the first three years of heavy fighting by American soldiers. Anti-war activities on college campuses are also significantly greater than during that same period. This is particularly significant since this comes despite the fact that today’s college students do not fear for their personal safety through the draft.

The Roman Catholic bishops and virtually all major Protestant denominations have come out against a U.S. invasion, whereas it was not until the last few years of the Vietnam War that so many churches came out with an anti-war position. While the U.S. labor movement was hawkish to the bitter end of the Vietnam War, several major labor unions are also now on record in opposition to a U.S. invasion of Iraq.

Serious concerns

The economic impact of an invasion

of Iraq—which could cost upwards of \$200 billion and could be significantly more should there be a long-term U.S. military occupation and administration—has raised serious concerns among economists and business leaders. As the federal deficit grows, domestic programs are cut, and states are struggling with unprecedented deficits, the economic impact of the war could be staggering. On January 13, a group of Republican businessmen took out a full-page ad in the Wall Street Journal denouncing the war. And a number of governors facing huge budget shortfalls have joined the ranks of administration critics.

Today’s anti-war movement is far more diverse in terms of women and people of color in positions of leadership. Increasing numbers of poor and working class people are becoming involved in anti-war activities, recognizing that it is their loved ones who will be doing most of fighting and dying and it is they who will be disproportionately affected by the inevitable cutbacks in social programs made nec-

essary by this incredibly expensive military adventure. The diverse age range of the anti-war movement is also a significant indicator of its strength, blending the experience of activists from the 1960s and earlier with the energy and creativity of younger activists.

Despite all this, the Bush administration may still decide to forge ahead with its planned invasion. It is far from inevitable, however, and there are increasing signs that this war can indeed be stopped before it starts.

* Stephen Zunes (stephen@coho.org) is an associate professor of Politics and chair of the Peace & Justice Studies Program at the University of San Francisco. He is Middle East editor for the Foreign Policy in Focus Project (online at www.fpif.org) and is the author of the recently released book *Tinderbox: U.S. Middle East Policy and the Roots of Terrorism* <www.common-couragepress.com>.

“Who gave America the right to decide the fate of other nations?”

Can imperial America change?

BY DR. ABDUL QADER TASH
Arab News

At last! The American government has announced that it is canceling the public relations campaign aimed at improving the image of American policy in the Islamic world.

The cancellation of course has come in the wake of the failed media program that accompanied the campaign. Some justified the failure as being due to the sheer weakness and simple-mindedness of the message. This may be true but it is not enough justification. The mistake does not lie in the weakness of the campaign but in something else entirely. The problem lies in American policy itself and not in the advertising campaign. What is required is for the political course to be corrected; no change in advertising techniques is necessary.

However strong and moving an advertising campaign may be, it will not succeed in improving the image; if the situation is bad, then the media will reflect that reality, not create it. The media “can fool some of the people some of the time but cannot fool all the people all the time.”

If the challenge is to correct the course that American policy has taken, the question becomes: Is that even possible? Is there any hope of changing that policy? The question is hard and the answer is even harder — for the stubborn American political mind is “imperial” and expansionist and difficult to change. The American political class was raised on the policy of imperialism. This imperial mentality was linked in the 19th century to the internationalization of industrial capital, and the economic and geographic expansion that rests on control of others’ lands and the export of

technology and American social codes and mores to its colonies.

Americans have deceived the world by portraying themselves as upholders of human rights, justice and freedom and believe that America is not an invading colonizing country. The truth of the matter is that colonialism is not merely a question of occupying land and military invasion — it is also the mental tendency to control and expand power. It is a mental invasion and the imposition of ideas and power over the market. Americans have excelled at this throughout their history of political, economic and media presence.

The imperialist tendency is old and rooted in the American political mind. It is what drove former US Senator William Fulbright to say: “Aren’t they exciting? The words of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge — they wanted America to have an empire simply because a big and powerful country such as America must have an empire.”

The struggle in America today is between two tendencies — an imperial one that occupies the minds of professional politicians and a popular humane tendency that mocks expansion and warns of the dangers of the US appointing itself “the world’s policeman.” The struggle is between the political mind and the popular conscience. The president and founder of an American organization working for peace, William Baker, says: “Who gave America the right to decide the fate of other nations and to fight a war under the pretenses of liberating Iraq and its people through bombs and missiles, to kill their children and bring destruction down upon them?” Yes, it is difficult, as Baker says, to Americanize the world’s ideas and systems of government or their customs and traditions.

peace should be given a real chance

Why America should not go to war against Iraq

BY AHMAD Y. MAJDOUBEH
Jordan Times

Until now, neither Middle Easterners nor members of the international community (aside from some US administration and some British government officials, that is) have any clue as to why America is so insistent on going to war against Iraq at this moment in time. What is so urgent about this war? What has happened to compel the US administration to want to wage it so badly?

First of all, when the US and its allies waged a war against Iraq in 1991, it was — primarily and most directly — because Iraq occupied a peaceful neighbouring country, Kuwait. What has Iraq done now to make the matter so pressing? Second, the UN inspectors are hard at work in Iraq now, searching for weapons of mass destruction. So far, Iraq is cooperating. Until now, there are no indications that over the past decade or so (during which it was subjected to crippling sanctions) Iraq has produced any weapons of mass destruction. Why should not the inspectors be given ample time — all the time they need — to complete their mission?

Reasons for not diving into war

There are many other reasons why America should not go to war against Iraq at this moment in time. They include:

- The international community, represented by the UN as well as all countries in the world (aside from Britain), have not approved the war. In fact, most countries in the world are against it. We are not talking here about traditional allies of Iraq, such as Russia, or traditional opponents of American foreign policies, such as France. We are, rather, talking about major European allies, such as Germany, Italy, Spain, etc. Look also at the increasing number of war opponents among the peoples of the world, including many in

America itself. In a sense, America finds itself almost alone in this war.

- All Arab and Middle Eastern countries, including those who supported the US in 1991, are against the war. They are all calling for either a peaceful solution or some sort of action done through the UN. The only country in the Middle East which is for the war is, of course, Israel; its aim is to destabilise the region in order to achieve its own (selfish and sinister) agenda.

- Is this war going to be any different from the war waged in 1991? In 1991, Iraq was attacked, its army was defeated and its all infrastructure (including that of weapons of mass destruction, we were told) was placed under close UN and UN inspection. What has the war and its aftermath resulted in? If the 1991 war and a decade of sanctions and inspections have not done the job (whatever that means), why should we believe that this new war would yield miracles? In fact, there are many who believe that, rather than solve matters, wars complicate them.

- Wars, anytime and anywhere, are destructive. First of all, those who are directly involved — the Iraqis, the Americans, and whoever decides to join — will suffer. In any “serious” war, and the intended war appears to be serious enough, both victors and losers sustain losses. If what both the Americans and the Iraqis are saying is correct, some very unpleasant surprises are in store for all armies involved. Moreover, the peoples of the neighbouring countries are expected to be affected. What have innocent civilians done? Why should they suffer?

- The war, should it happen, will be unfair to all the countries of the Middle East. For more than a century now, and for the past five decades in particular, the Middle East has been desperately seeking security, peace and stability in order to embark on social and economic development. Middle Easterners, as the American saying goes, are trying to make a buck in

the world like everybody else. They have come up with all kinds of reform, development and investment plans. They are doing their best to stand on their feet, live and let live. Circumstances such as the intended war, however, come to obstruct and frustrate their efforts. You plan and build, and this war comes to both obstruct your plans and destroy what you have built. The war is not in the interest of this region.

- Immediately and ultimately, the war negatively affects the strategic interests of America and the West in the Middle East. There are those who argue, of course, that the war is waged — among other things — for the sake of those interests: access to oil, resources, markets, etc. Personally, I do not see how peace can hinder or prevent American access to oil, resources and markets. Generally, how have American interests been served by war? Take the Vietnam war, for example;

how did it serve America’s short- and long-term interests? As far as one is able to tell, American interests in the Middle East will be served if peace in the Middle East materialises and the region and America (as well as European and world countries) cooperate in economic and cultural ventures. To say that war serves peace is, to say the least, a contradiction in terms.

For all these reasons and many others, I believe that peace should be given a real chance. Not only should the inspectors be given time to complete their mission, but America, along with the international community and its Arab allies and friends, should put their heads together to avert war and find a peaceful solution. In the end, peace is a safer and a better option for all. As an ancient anti-war Arab poet has put it: “War is what you have seen and tasted.”

VACANCY

PROJECT ACCOUNTANT

CARE International has recently started to implement a long-term development project, working with the Yemen Women’s Union, at both headquarter and Branch level. CARE is looking for a project accountant who is able to manage the financial and office administration affairs of the project.

The position will be based in Sana’a, although occasional traveling may be required to provide training and assistance to YWU branches and centers.

Applicants are invited to send their applications (a CV and covering letter) to P. O. Box 11471 or Fax to 01 466 052 or email ywu@y.net.ye. Applications must be received by 3rd February 2003.

Only those candidates short-listed for interview will be contacted. Interviews will be held on 8th & 9th February.

Poverty and family disputes are among the main factors behind it:

Horrific facts on street children in Yemen



BY: YASSER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF
ym_almayasi@yahoo.com

Children are the hope of a brighter tomorrow and the joy of today. But the seeds of the future are sometimes planted and grown in the worst circumstances, forced by cruel fate to exist in circumstances far from secure and decent life.

An alarming number of Yemeni children from various regions are born into the streets and have no place to call home. Factors such as war, epidemics, and poverty have influenced this number to grow every day. And hence, a phenomenon called street children came to view, causing a threat to the social security of the region and many other problems in the Yemeni society. This is an investigative report focusing on the phenomenon and analyzing the situation with input from concerned parties.

Ms Suad Al-Qadasi, Chairperson of the Women's Forum for Research and Training (WFRT) said: "Although the issue of street children has been existing since a very long time, it came to people's attention only recently. This is mainly a consequence of the deterioration of living standards in the country; the poor level of living conditions and the high poverty rate resulted in turning innocent child into victims of violence from his/her own

family and from outsiders. The child in question goes off track and becomes a threat to the society as a whole and even to him/herself. Children living in unhealthy circumstances are vulnerable to attacks in all forms and ways. They are often exposed to abuse and beaten up and sometimes even g through sexual molestation. The way to tackle these issues is through raising awareness in the community and providing a decent income to poor families as well as enforces the law when a crime is committed."

Mr. Abdullatif Al-Hamadani from the Media and Awareness department at the Supreme Council for Mother and Child says: "Street children are a phenomenon is a direct consequence of poverty. It is also neglected because of social, educational, and other reasons. Many factors come together to contribute in this issue and they differ from one country to another. Sometimes more than one factor jointly causes this phenomenon to flourish. For example losing both parents does not necessarily drive a child to the street, whereas with both parents there and family violence existing, it is likely to that children may want to leave the house and become street children."

According to Mr. Al-Hamadani, the main factors behind this phenomenon can be summarized in the following:

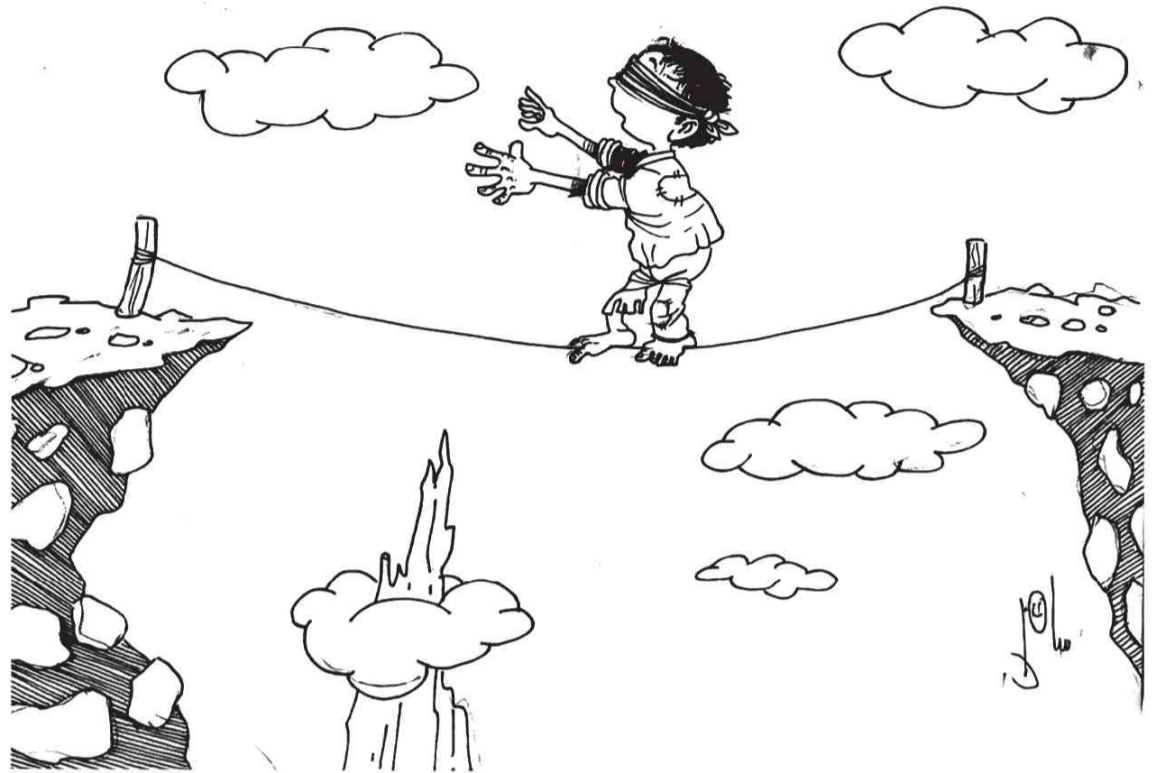
- Poverty: Statistics indicate that at least 35% of the population lives below poverty line. A large percent of those poor Yemenis live in the suburbs. Unemployment is more than 30%.

Unemployment levels reached their peak following the Gulf crisis when Yemeni migrants in the Gulf headed back to Yemen causing a burden on the national economy. Poverty could create psychological complexes and child of poor families become victims of the tough circumstances they live in and set off to the streets searching for ways to find alternatives.

- Weak family relations: Violence at home, polygamy, divorce and the death of a parent are all factors that contribute to tense and weak family relations which eventually cause children to run away from home or learn bad behavior.

- Dropping out of school: Another reason why children end up in the streets is that they did not like it elsewhere including the school. Sometimes the system of education in schools or teachers' treatment of students turn children off and make them decide to run away from school or at least become truants. Sometimes it's the bad company that results in this phenomenon. In other situations children are forced out of school by their own parents in order to support the family financially by working to make ends meet. When the child shoulders the responsibility in an early age with no guidance, he/she could turn to illegal ways to earn money and eventually develop a criminal record.

Researcher Walid Gahzar, talked about the relative relation between poverty and increase of street children saying: "To start with, we must realize



that poverty is an outcome of a number of political, developmental and economical elements in underdeveloped countries. And when poverty dominates a certain sector of life or society, it produces negative symptoms such as street children, illiteracy, and social violence... etc. But a vital element that most studies fail to cover in such issues is that women are the basis for the cure of such social diseases because they are the most influential factor when it comes to children. Women in developing countries are less fortunate when it comes to finding a job or making a living, and hence young girls are forced in most cases to make ends meet through prostitution or other degrading means. Other reasons that may force girls to the street may not be economical. Statistics indicate that 51.4% of the child labor market is composed of females. This is due to the fact that women in most developing countries take up domestic or farming duties such as in agriculture or selling food products. Also most women are not encouraged to study in schools especially in the suburbs, due to the school expenses and the traditions that view education for women and sometimes for men as luxury. What is noticed, is that street girls are more liable to abuse and violence than street boys, and this class of society is the least privileged and most deprived in health and education.

Psychology specialist Ms. Jamila Mohammed Nasser added that although street children face sexual abuse, there are no official statistics on this issue. Mr. Nasser carried out a field survey on sexual molestation of children and found out that such incidents happen through attraction and fooling of the child in order to lure them into something and then take advantage of their weakness. She defined sexual child molestation as a forceful sexual intercourse between an adult and a child. The study disclosed that children are abused in most cases by relatives, and that they are trapped in situations where they cannot tell what is happening to them. In many cases the child becomes confused on how to react to sexual molestation because in the same time he would expose himself to punishment of the abuser. However, these incidents leave long lasting marks in the child's psychology, which he carries with him to the future and affects him or her whenever he tries to start a family or becomes an adult.

She emphasized that girls develop fear of men and lose confidence in themselves and sometimes refrain from marriage and normal relationship with men because of the fear that their husbands



Walid Gahzar



Abdullatif Al-Hamadani



Abdulrahman Abdulwahab Ali



Jamila M. Nasser

workshops and about their lost virginity. Some abused kids become homosexual as time passes because they find security in their own gender.

As for males, she said that most boys who are molested become gays and eventually turn to abuse younger boys whom they interact with.

Ms. Nasser pointed out that it is very important to lay down an encapsulating overall national strategy that limits the phenomenon of street children and enforces relevant laws against child abusers especially when sexual abuse. In the same time however, she called for the creation of rehabilitation centers and institutes for those victims. She also stressed on the importance of awareness and religious values that instate faith and moral beliefs in all levels of the society. Moreover, she urged the concerned authorities to give the topic what it deserves of research and studies in order to be able to address this problem in the right way.

A filed survey was carried on street children in Yemen by the Communication Psychology specialist and researcher Abdulrahman Abdulwahab Ali and was supervised by WFRT. In the survey, Mr. Abdulrahman discussed this phenomenon and its different aspects and causes. He focused on the attractions that those children find in the street and if their needs are met. The study revealed that there is no major gap between the ratios of street children to normal children in all the districts mentioned in the survey. It also said that most of those children were forced into the street because they became the supporters of their families. The survey also found out that from the sample of children they took, a majority of 78.6% was males, and that 47.1% of street children did not enroll in schools at all. 38.6% of the children beggars in the street are there because of dire need for money, and those have traveled from their original hometown looking for ways to make a living.

The study also disclosed that street children are mainly divided into four segments, street vendors, laborers in

workshops and about their lost virginity. Some abused kids become homosexual as time passes because they find security in their own gender. As for males, she said that most boys who are molested become gays and eventually turn to abuse younger boys whom they interact with. Ms. Nasser pointed out that it is very important to lay down an encapsulating overall national strategy that limits the phenomenon of street children and enforces relevant laws against child abusers especially when sexual abuse. In the same time however, she called for the creation of rehabilitation centers and institutes for those victims. She also stressed on the importance of awareness and religious values that instate faith and moral beliefs in all levels of the society. Moreover, she urged the concerned authorities to give the topic what it deserves of research and studies in order to be able to address this problem in the right way.

One can conclude that the phenomenon of street children remains a serious and devastating problem that is causing outrageous consequences on Yemen's own future. But what is even more serious is the fact that the phenomenon is in the rise.

Many donor countries and establishments have continuously pointed to this problem and offered to hold seminars, workshops, etc. But there has been no solid move to start a rehabilitation center or make field surveys to investigate why this is happening.

The solution now is to stop theoretical debates and start practical solutions in order to save the next generation from a horrid future. Governments, NGOs and individuals should work together in order to combat this phenomenon and provide suitable conditions for the children to live in.

Our children are our future, let us not waste time dwelling in the other less significant issues of the past and start working on our future, and our children's future.

Captions:

- Internal family disputes and rough treatment of parents are one of the reasons behind driving children to the street.
- Abused girls develop a strong fear of men and may turn to homosexual relations looking for security, while and abused boys become violent introverts and abuse younger children in turn.
- 47.1% of street children did not enroll in school at all. 38.6% of children beggars in the street are there because of dire need for money.
- Poverty, Poor family relations, and dropping out of school are factors contributing to the increasing number of street children.

MUS'ID & MUS'IDA

First Ever Yemeni Radio Series published in a newspaper

41

Written by
Abdulrahman Mutahhar

Translated by
Janet Watson

The unscrupulous executor

M – You know, the thing that makes me most angry and upset is people confiscating other people's money and possessions, particularly when the victims are orphans or defenceless women, and particularly when this daylight robbery is perpetuated by the executors of wills and testaments.

Ma – Oh I could tell you a story that would make your hair stand on end, which concerns our family. If we knew someone who could make a film out of it, I'm sure it would win an Oscar!

M – Go on then, tell me about it!

Ma – My uncle, my father's own brother, 'may his son not grow up to be a man and may Muhammad not put in a good word for him', was appointed executor for us after the death of my father. As soon as he got hold of the will, he went and forged another so that he could erase the name of the other executor.

M – That is blatant betrayal of the trust with which he was entrusted and which he'll be asked to account for in front of God, 'on the day when neither wealth nor progeny will serve him well, and only those pure of heart will benefit.'

Ma – Praise be to God! Anyway, after he removed the name of the second executor, he took all the papers and documents, and went and altered the lot as he saw fit, with no sense of shame or fear of God!

M – And who told him he could do that? Who was the writer, and who were the witnesses, and how on earth did their consciences allow them to aid and abet this kind of treachery and disregard for the law of God!

Ma – Oh, you don't need to worry about that! There are plenty of people around with weak wills and no real conscience. You know the saying, 'Birds of a feather flock together'.

M – May God protect us from the work of the devil and all his accomplices! This type of person, Mus'ida, in families and in society in general works like a cancerous cell in an otherwise healthy body.

Ma – Hang on a bit! That's not all! There's still the graduation party!

M – Go on!

Ma – After me and my full brother and my half brother grew up, we asked the executor for a copy of the papers and various documents my father had left behind, and he handed us six pieces of paper. The first was my mother and father's marriage certificate. The second certified my father's divorce of my step-mother, and his marriage to her again with a new contract and new brideprice. The third mentioned the items to be passed on – two stone cooking pots, four brass spittoons, the snuff box, two robes, and the deceased's loofa!

M – He should have taken those documents and put them in water and then drunk their ink! He handed you a set of completely worthless papers! Carry on!

Ma – Wait! There's still the fourth and fifth pieces of paper, and what they contained shows what he was really on about!

M – Go on!

Ma – According to the fourth document, my step-mother had taken all the papers and documents when my father was on his deathbed and handed them to her son, who then hid some of the papers, sold some of the items, and built himself the house he's living in this very minute!

M – No one's going to believe him over that! But watch out, because the executor will now try to get the beneficiaries to fight it out amongst themselves, in order to divert them from what he's up to.

Ma – You've got it in one! If he'd only satisfied himself with cheating us, that would've been almost forgivable. He then went up to my step-mother and her son and told them that Mus'ida and her brother would be coming to make trouble and take them to court over the house they were living in, which was their property! Then he told them to have a big stick ready before we even knocked on the door!

M – God is great! They say it's only weak people who'll let you down.

Ma – Then the executor came over to see me and my brother, and gave us the same rubbish! If you want what's rightfully yours, make sure you take a big stick with you. So he wanted to make us fall out and fight amongst ourselves with absolutely no cause! And all this deception and hatred was stirred up so that he could distract us from his cheating and falsification and stealing the wealth of others. As the Yemeni philosopher said, 'He who means to cauterise others will find himself cauterised even more!' And he who delights in his cousin's misfortune will find it come back to him!

**The Prophet (PBUH).
Zayd, p. 40.
Qanun Sana'a, p. 14.**

Introducing the Yemen Family Health and Family Planning Programme:

Caring for Yemenis' health



The Family Health and Family Planning Program (FHFP) is being conducted by the Ministry of Public Health and Population along with the Futures Group International in collaboration with EPOS, who provide of consulting services in virtually every area of health care. The project is financed by Yemen and the German Bank for Reconstruction (KfW).

The project aims at helping the Yemeni government meet the increasing demands for family health and planning in line with the government's policies in this regard.

To focus on this important project, Yemen Times journalist Ismail Al-Ghabiri met with the project's Team Leader, Dr. Bader B. Rashid and filed the following interview.

Q: What is the importance of this program?

A: The Yemen Family Health & Family Planning Program (FHFP I) is implemented by a consortium comprising The Futures Group International and EPOS Health Consultants under contract to the Ministry of Public Health and Population, and co-funded through Kreditanstalt Fur Wiederaufbau (KfW), Federal Republic of Germany. The project is to be implemented over the period February 1, 2000 to March 31, 2004.

The FHFP I Program is the first project of its kind in Yemen and focuses on integrating the private sector & NGOs in Reproductive Health / Family Planning service delivery, in line with the approved policy in Yemen, which encourages greater participation of the private sector & NGOs in services delivery & method



Bader Bashir Rashid, team leader

distribution.

Q: What is FHFP purpose & how is it implemented?

A: The purpose of the Yemen Family Health and Family Planning Program (FHFP I) is to improve the delivery of reproductive, maternal and child health services, and contribute to meeting the increasing demand for affordable and accessible family planning methods in order to improve the health of women and children.

The Program consists of two distinct but interrelated components: family planning component which addresses the delivery of family planning services & methods and an infrastructure component which addresses structural improvements at health facilities in 4 target governorates.

The FHFP I Program objectives for its 2 components are:

1) Family Planning: To increase demand for, access to and availability of affordable modern contraceptives provided through the private sector and NGO community. Its services will be complementary to public sector service delivery and

thereby assist in achieving the sustainability of family planning services in Yemen.

2) Infrastructure development: To improve the infrastructure of health-care services by renovating and equipping, extending and supplying selected health facilities as well as constructing a Health Manpower Institute in Al- Mahweet.

Q: What is the target and Program coverage?

A: The targets can be summarized in nationwide family planning, and in enhancing Infrastructure in Ibb, Abyan, Mahweet and Hajjah.

specifically packaged for Yemen under the brand name PROTEC. All these methods are safe, effective, reversible and registered at the Ministry of Public Health and Population.

- PROTEC products are subsidized and priced significantly lower than prices of similar products available through the Private Sector.
- Sales: To pharmacies, drugstores, hospitals, clinics, and other private sector health facilities; as well as through NGO's health-related facilities.
- Distribution: From 5 warehouses of our partner distributor, NATCO,

FHFP program focuses on integrating the private sector and NGOs in Reproductive Health

Q: What about the objectives?

A: Based on the mentioned set target, the main objectives are: To strengthen and expand the provision of RH / FP services. And that can be done through the private sector and NGOs by increasing demand for modern contraceptives, increasing access to modern contraceptives, increasing availability of affordable modern contraceptives, and increasing public awareness of the impact of RH / FP on the health of mothers and children.

The second objective is to improve the physical infrastructure, equipment and drug supply at MCH Centers and Health Units in the selected governorates.

Q: How are the Project Strategies implemented?

A: The family planning component works through partnership with the private sector and the participating NGO's. It is complimentary to the public sector services. It focuses on the following targets:

- Target Audience: Married couples who desire to use birth spacing methods.
- Products: The FHFP I Program distributes a range of Pills, Injectable, IUD and Condom,

effectively covering all of Yemen, and through collaborating NGOs such as the Charitable Society of Social Welfare.

- Demand Generation by use of mass media and communications materials to increase awareness and knowledge of potential users, increase trial and use of products, increase knowledge, counseling skills and participation of doctors, increase knowledge and participation of pharmacists, increase knowledge, counseling skills and participation of NGO's, and increase awareness and participation of local communities.
- Public Relations and Advocacy by increasing awareness and involvement of leaders, tribal religious Sheikhs, local councils and other community leaders, and increasing the awareness and improve the information available by use the media, such as T.V talk shows addressing RH / FP services and methods available through the Program.
- Training of Providers: The FHFP I Program focuses on training Physicians, Pharmacists, Midwives and Outreach workers. The training aims at providing the



FHFP Training Workshop

most up-to-date information on contraceptive technology and counseling skills. The range of methods and the training lead the physician and the Yemeni family to use PROTEC methods through an "Informed Choice".

As for the infrastructure component, the FHFP I Program is implemented in 2 phases: Phase 1 in 14 sites, Phase 2 an additional 12 - 14 sites. In all these selected health facilities, the Program is renovating and rehabilitating these facilities including supplying them with equipments, supplies and furniture.

Q: What are your planned activities during this year 2003?

A: Our programme's activities for this year include the expansion of the distribution of its PROTEC products to increase their availability through the private sector and NGO's all over the country, continuing the training of service providers all over the nation,

continuing the communications campaign and to expand it through use of mass media channels like T.V and radio aiming at providing the correct information to the Yemeni families and to address issues relating to misconceptions, and also completing the infra-structure development of the selected health facilities.

Q: Does the Program work in rural areas?

A: In the Family Planning component, the Program will continue to expand its services in order that it reaches all private sector service providers in urban and rural areas. On the other hand, the Infra-Structure development takes place primarily in health facilities in rural areas.

Q: Any other comments that you have?

A: I would like to thank Yemen Times for its role in following up the situation of the Yemeni family's health and population issues.



Receiving workshop participants



Yemeni doctors at training

First U.S. health workers get smallpox jabs

By GREG FROST

FARMINGTON, Conn. (Reuters) - Connecticut health workers rolled up their sleeves on Friday and became the first American civilians to be vaccinated against smallpox under a controversial government plan to protect against a biological attack.

"It was like a number of rapid tingles on the surface of my skin and then it was over," said James Hadler, director of the Connecticut health department's infectious diseases division.

Hadler was among three doctors who bared their arms in front of cameras at the University of Connecticut Health Center in Farmington to be jabbed 15 times with a thin, two-pronged needle dipped in the yellowish liquid vaccine.

Friday was the first possible day for vaccinations to take place as part of the new Homeland Security Act, and Connecticut led the way with the first immunizations of about dozen health care workers, state health officials said.

But not everyone was lining up to get the vaccinations.

The union that represents just under half the 4,000 workers at the University of Connecticut Health Center advised its members against volunteering for the jabs because of

questions over who would pay in the event of complications.

Smallpox was wiped out in 1979 but experts fear countries such as Iraq, and perhaps terrorist groups, could use the virus as a weapon. Smallpox is infectious and kills 30 percent of its victims.

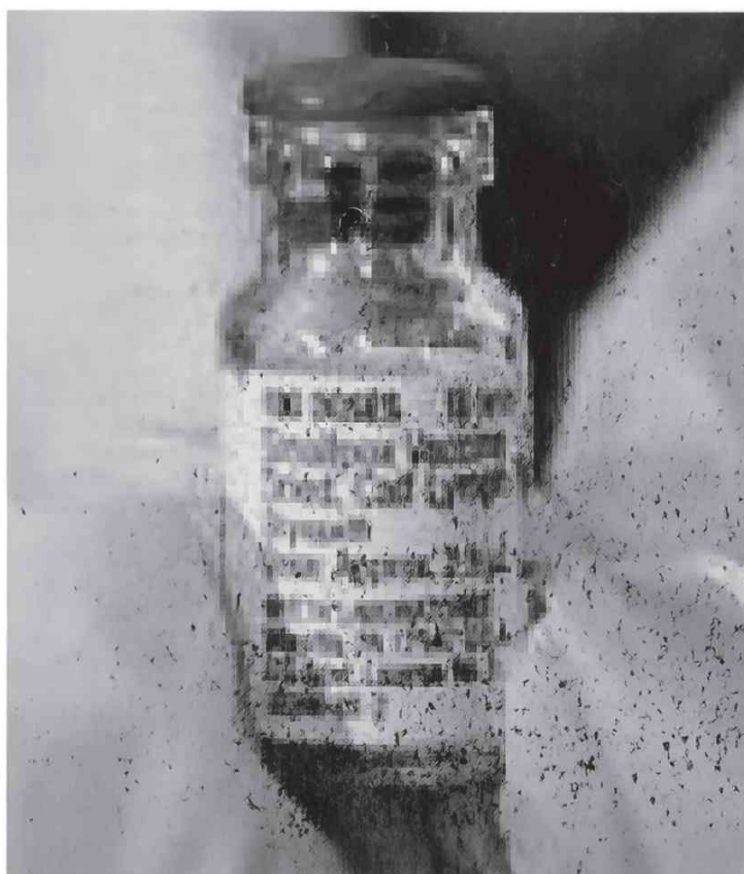
Workers express reservations

The vaccine used is old and causes many side effects, ranging from a general feeling of malaise to a severe rash, blindness and a brain inflammation called encephalitis. When administered years ago to the general public, it killed between one and two in every million people who got it.

Americans may also be more vulnerable to side effects than in the 1970s, when general vaccination ended — in part because the AIDS virus, which infects an estimated 1 million Americans, depresses the immune system, as do modern cancer treatments.

But President Bush decided the risk was worth taking in view of the possible threat of biological attack. Experts have warned of the threat for years but officials became especially concerned after the October 2001 letter-borne anthrax attacks that killed five people.

Bush ordered the vaccination of about 400,000 health care and emergency workers who would be the first to care for any smallpox victims, and



A doctor at the University of Connecticut Health Center holds the smallpox vaccine used to inoculate volunteer health care workers Jan. 24, in Farmington, Connecticut. Hospital workers in Connecticut lined up for the first broad smallpox vaccinations in the United States in 30 years under a government program aimed at protecting against a biological attack. Reuters

of 500,000 military troops. Up to 10 million people may ultimately be vaccinated, and Bush said any member of the general public who really insists can get the vaccine, too.

"By vaccinating groups of health care workers and emergency responders, we are assured that vaccine response teams are available to vaccinate others," Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson told a meeting of the U.S. conference of mayors.

"If there is a release of smallpox, we will immediately release smallpox vaccine to the general public," he added.

But Keith Inrig, a radiologic technologist at the health center in Farmington, said that while he agreed in principle with the new government plan, he decided not to get vaccinated immediately because of questions about possible side-effects.

"If the health center wants to proceed with this timeline that they're on, they should at least take the time to sit down and answer our questions," said Inrig, a union member.

Inrig wondered whether he would be penalized if he got sick from the vaccine and had to take time off. He also said his current health care provider would treat complications from the vaccine like any other disease — meaning he would have to shoulder

part of the cost of visiting a doctor or being hospitalized.

Thompson said he hoped to address these concerns. He said he was discussing the possibility of some kind of compensation fund with the White House Office of Management and Budget and with legislators in Congress.

"I hope it will go a long ways to, allay some of the concerns and criticisms so far," he said.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said earlier this week it had shipped the first 20,000 doses of smallpox vaccine to four states — Connecticut, Nebraska, Vermont and Los Angeles County in California.

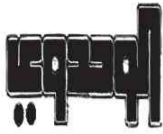
The American Nurses Association has urged a delay in the vaccine rollout, citing concerns about compensation of any victims of the vaccine.

Last week, a panel of experts appointed by the Institute of Medicine also questioned the policy but said market forces may decide. They said health workers should feel free to refuse to get the vaccine and if enough did, the government should get the message that the plan needed adjusting.

But CDC Director Dr. Julie Gerberding said there were plenty of volunteers and added the agency was moving ahead quickly with the plan

Local Press

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr



Al-Wahdawi weekly, organ of the Nasserite Unionist Organization, 21 Jan. 2003.

Main headlines:

- Government begins unannounced price "dose", raising prices by %15
- National stand against demonstrations draft law
- 18-member cell for liquidation of 28 national figures
- NUO secretary-general al-Mikhlafti: American won't succeed in penetrating people's fabric
- Arrests following a kidnap of a Sanhani child
- Government requested to break sanctions on Iraq
- 90 days to go before transferring al-Mouyad to Washington

Columnist Ali al-Saqqaq says in his article this week that "No to War" has been the slogan raised by all demonstrations and marches that took to the streets in many capitals and cities all over the world. People of the world who reject the war spelled out this slogan, condemning the war the United States intends to wage against a free independent country. America has unmasked its ugly face while massing up its armies and war fleets to the Arab Gulf region aiming at occupying it and then to attempt an invasion and occupation of Iraq.

America has thus become naked and exposed more than any time before. Its allegations of defending freedoms and human rights are no longer believed by others and in the case of Iraq it is not after destroying weapons of mass destruction nor to secure the region against what it describes as the "Iraqi danger".

All peoples of the world, including the American people, have realized that the U.S. administration's first and ultimate goal is to impose its control over Iraq's oil riches to satisfy the greed of American oil companies that run and steer the American administration.

Mr al-Saqqaq concludes that in order to abort America's schemes and dreams of its companies, Arab nation peoples

have to play their role in exerting pressure on their rulers by all ways and means to prevent the American aggression before it takes place.



Al-Shoura weekly, organ of the Yemeni People's Forces Union, 19 Jan. 2003.

Main headlines:

- Due to corruption, Bajammal government economic shortcomings, Yemeni rial continues decline against dollar
- Increase of prices rates, poverty, failure of monetary policies
- Woman demonstration demanding release of al-Mouyad
- Baath Conference elects Qassem Sallam the party's secretary-general
- America has no evidence against al-Mouyad

The newspaper's editorial written by Yahya Mohammed al-Shawush says there should not be any skepticism or belittling of the President's call on all national political and social forces for standing abreast in facing the challenges resulting from increase and growth of extremist, violent and terrorist acts. All indicators point out that leniency and negligence in facing of this phenomenon would the country to the unknown. But the president's initiative, despite of its significance it has many shortcomings and gaps. And this has led the political forces, invited to alignment, not to respond and react to the initiative. One of the remarks against the initiative is that it did not exceed the boundaries of oral calls by president Ali Abdulla Saleh and official media. The initiative was not crystallized in a written project with clear features and defined means.

On the other hand the political forces called for unifying their ranks are accused in the official political and information address of not respecting the constitution and the regulations and laws. They are further accused of having links with foreign embassies and of feeling hatred towards the armed forces and their personnel.

It should be understood that ending

violence and extremism and terror could not be accomplished or rather impossible without removing their causes represented by spread of corruption, deterioration of economic and security situation, collapse of educational system and absence of laws and order.



Al-Jamaheer weekly, organ of the Arab Baath Socialist party, 19 Jan. 2003.

Main headlines:

- Demonstrations all over world capitals opposing war on Iraq
- Saddam Hussein: New Hurlagu will commit suicide at Baghdad walls
- Coercive measures in Amran prisons
- ElBaradie claims finding new documents
- Meeting in solidarity with Iraq
- Jordanian engineers union refuses government committees
- Because of marriage, three girls kill their father in Sa'da
- Boycott committees hold conference in Damascus
- Yemeni-Syrian joint committee convene in Damascus

Editor in chief of the newspaper says in his editorial that with the escalation of Palestinian resistance against the Zionist entity the theory of security and security barriers have fallen apart. Those did not prevent the Palestinians from reaching the Zionist entity depth to threaten it despite the acts of using all means of killing, demolition of houses and arrests of hundreds of Palestinian resistants. Against all these the Zionist entity was pushed to act according to two coinciding alternatives:

The first is represented by accusing Syria of hiding Iraq's weapons and another time by claiming harboring of what it describes as terrorist organizations. The second is the pushing for holding Palestinian-Palestinian dialogues under auspices of Egypt and the new world order with the aim of halting the intifadha and resistance and to accept the return to "peace" conducted by new negotiating personalities.

Hence, the thinking of dividing the

Arab issues is a wrong idea because the nature of events confirms that they are interconnected. This makes the priorities of solutions is by making the Americans miss the opportunity of striking Iraq. Such an attempt could be realized through serious initiatives and considering the aggression on Iraq as an aggression on the entire nation. There must be a work on the necessity of the Palestinians adherence to the resistance as a strategic option.



Al-Mithaq weekly, organ of General people's congress party (GPC), 20 Jan. 2003.

Main headlines:

- Government measures to control prices, market stability
- Civil service authorities refer 10,000 surplus labor to service fund
- GPC nominates number of women for parliamentary elections
- Yemeni sea ports resume activity following government measures
- Yemen refuses handing over al-Mouyad to America, insists on trying him in Yemen

Mr. Abdulsalam Abdulmajeed al-Athwari confirms in an article that under the sad circumstances in the country and while it is preparing for holding legislative elections, prices rise in markets and value of the rial goes down in a clearly unjustifiable reason. The government is in possession of good capability with existence of foreign currencies reserve exceeding four billion dollar. This assert of foreign currency reserve reflects the governments ability to keep the value of its currency away from any decline or negative reflections. Thus the government is able to achieve stability and reflect confidence on part of investment activities. The higher economic council headed by the Prime Minister has also responded that the price rise and decline of national currency value is unjustifiable. The writer maintains that the logical solution of the problem lies in pursuing a policy of mitigating the monopolistic control on basic goods and foods. Even if prices would rise, it should be accord-

ing to rules evaluating essential causes and factors and proportion of their effect. They should be dealt with seriously and with a transparent vision and change in the central Bank policy, which has become governed by a mania for speculation and selling by latest market price. There must be a policy activating movement of bank activity through integration between the central Bank and other banks by governing rules of exchange and credits with the real market value directly.



Annas weekly, 20 Jan. 2003.

Main headlines:

- Protest activities against detaining al-Mouyad, observers expect his return to Yemen
- Joint meeting parties students, condemn the new students union
- Al-Haq party demands investigation into Al-Mutawakil car accident,
- Technical team examines car wreckage

Columnist Dr. Hosni al-Jawshai says in his article the provocative policy against peoples by the American government would lead to more hatred and love of revenge against whatever American.

The U.S extremist rightist government's nor-respect of simplest human rights, which it violates everyday at Guantanamo detention camp is one of these examples. The entire worlds have become convinced that Washington's extremist government is incredible and fabricates events and quickly attach accusations of terror to Muslim peoples and charity organizations. It accuses countries of possessing mass destruction weapons and Islamic charitable organizations of supporting al-Qaeda organization. It has been clear during "September 2001 events when it accused Osama bin Laden just half an hour after the attacks, and then destroyed the Islamic country of Afghanistan for allowing bin Laden to live in it. Nowadays the U.S government intends to destroy Iraq, the second

Islamic country under the ready-made charge of possessing weapons of mass destruction. After two months of search, the UN inspection teams did not find any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, still America continues massing up its troops and weapons to invade Iraq.

Moving all these armies against Iraq without authorization from UN Security Council and without evidence on Iraq's possession of those weapons, is a provocation to all peace-loving countries in the world. All would wonder about the reasons behind the security council resolutions and further more one should query about the reason behind the security council existence.



RAY weekly, organ of sons of Yemen leagues party, 21 Jan. 2003.

Main headlines:

- Al-Nashiri admits of planning for attacks targeting American navy
- Two thousand Yemeni women demonstrate in front of German embassy, German foreign ministry advises its citizens to leave Yemen
- Germany: Yemen has no right to demand handing over al-Mouyad
- Canadian company announces oil discovery in Yemen
- Saudi Arabia heads for monitoring its borders with Yemen
- Symposium on challenges facing woman candidates for parliament membership
- Kuwait spy telephoned persons in Sana'a

In his article Mr. Hamdi Dobala says probably one of the serious mistakes some political parties make is to depend in every round of elections on persons, lacking of simplest objective criteria for truthful representation of their parties. The also do not possess ability to meet important conditions of future legislative and monitoring task in the parliament.

With the approaching date of the forthcoming parliamentary elections fears of many are increasing that this mistake will be repeated.

Letters to the Editor

Horrifying assassination of Jarallah
I feel panic and my whole body is shivering for assassination of Comrade Jarallah Omar and totally denounce and condemn this barbaric act which is not justifiable by any religion of whatsoever on earth!

I also condemn the killing of 3 innocent people and wounding the fourth one without any justification! Those Americans came for our help and they are doing a humanitarian job for the sake of our own flesh. They left their own homes and families to come up here and serve us and serve our country and they are rewarded by a devilish way! Now how on earth can we say to the whole world that we deserve to be assisted by our friends any where they exist. How can we explain to them that we are a civilized nation, when every time a friend who comes to our rescue will fell dead by our own hands!

But why? Why we kill innocent people! Do we deserve to live after all? It is very disgusting and offensive!

How dare a human kill innocent people in cold blood, after all do we deserve to live? I don't think so!

Syed Hashim Hasson Ali
fanon21@maktob.com

Jarallah's demise and Islamic fundamentalism

The assassination of Jarallah Omar has shown that Islamic fundamentalists have never convinced those outside of their narrow minded social groups that Islamic fundamentalism has anything to offer. So, in order to enforce their viewpoint, the fundamentalists murder others who hold different beliefs and who are usually not in a position to defend themselves. Three doctors, people who spent a lifetime HELPING others, had their lives stolen by a stupid, ignorant and evil Islamic fundamentalist who has contributed NOTHING to your country. A well known and respected politician was

also murdered by another Islamic religious freak who also has never contributed anything to your country except hate and a mindless lust for power through the manipulation of your religion. What is the solution? I can offer suggestions, but it is infinitely better if your people can learn to live in the modern world without hating it or fearing it.

Keith Kweinman
keith_weinman@hotmail.com

Jibla killing remembered

I am a British national who has previously lived for many years in Yemen, and I was devastated to hear of the murder of three Americans who lived in Jibla last month. Supporters of Yemen and Yemeni people have been murdered and Yemen has lost some good friends.

Recently US forces assassinated four Yemenis. Only one British reporter, Robert Fisk in the Independent, had the courage to call it murder, but that is what it was. I stopped and thought what would happen if Yemen had assassinated four British people on British soil. Apart from causing a diplomatic crisis, ordinary peace-loving Arabic people living in the West would be targeted by racists and extremists and their lives would be at risk. I would condemn the perpetrators and expect them to be bought to justice. In this supposed scenario, I would also see some responsibility lying with the government whose policy had been to act in violation of international law.

In the same way, I hope that the Yemeni murderer who killed these innocent Americans will be punished according to the law, but in my opinion the blame also lies with the way the US has ignored international law and human rights in its operations within Yemen. The Americans who had died had lived in Yemen safely, between them for 67 years. It was only after

Yemenis were assassinated by USA that these horrendous crimes occurred. Islam is used and abused by both Muslims and non-Muslims in the current tensions between East and West, but I believe the core underlying reason for these murders is not religion but an unequal struggle to control resources in the Middle East.

The West has overwhelming power which it abuses causing frustration, resentment and retaliation from the Arabs it attempts to dominate. Whilst I understand this reaction it does not in any way excuse the crime but Western leaders need to look carefully at the crisis in the relationships between East and West to prevent further bloodshed.

Unfortunately, the ramifications will not only be the punishment of the person who committed the crime. Ordinary peace-loving Yemenis will have yet more restrictions on their lives and their reputation abroad will be further tarnished. Those of us who fight to make people in the West understand that Islam is a religion of peace will find our struggle for greater understanding between religions and justice for Muslims and Arabs much more difficult.

Judith Brown,
Sallydean22@aol.com

Time for national unity

The sad news of the death of Jarallah Omar came as a shock to all Yemenis inside and outside the country, not only because of the loss of an important figure in the political arena in Yemen but also of the timing of this horrible act. We all know that we live in a critical historical moment in which uncertainty and instability are the prominent features of the world political scene.

National unity is a must in these dark days. Right from the top of the political hierarchy to the ordinary man we have national and moral responsibility to

face the new situation, created by the September 11th attacks. As a unified nation, the last thing the country needs is petty political bickering that will benefit only the country's enemies. Accusation and counter accusation is not beneficial to the nation's interests and any one who will use the last sad incident for political gains will be wrong. The death of Mr Omar is a loss to the GPC before it is a loss to his own party.

We are all Yemenis and our foremost goal must be the modernization and prosperity of our beloved country. We can do this only if we are united. The nation's interests must be put before all other personal or partisan interests. We have wasted a lot of valuable time and history will not forgive us if we waste more.

Abdulrahman al-Huthafy
aburashed2000@maktob.com

The killings in Yemen

I'm sending this email to all the Yemeni communities in Canada and the US and I hope this action will be taken into consideration in Yemen too. I was wondering if the Yemeni people took any action with regards to the tragic murders that were committed in Jibla? If not, perhaps a Candle light vigil or something of the sort could be held in the memory of the innocent missionaries that died. They did a lot of work in Yemen and helped a lot of Yemeni people and the least we could do is, remember them. Hope to see some action in Yemen.

Malaika Ali
angelicbeauty07@yahoo.com

Jibla incident: Why?

I would like to forward these questions to the Yemeni people concerning the Jibla attack: Where is the tolerance purported by your prophet? Where is the kindness, the love of life, the welcome of strangers? These mis-

sionaries loved your people, and chose to be buried there instead back home in the US. Yet you refuse to help do anything about the hate being preached by your imams, refuse to e-mail the FBI (fbi.org) about Al-qaeda plots and wanted militants. May God forgive you for your hatred.

Ray J. Annis

Sebring, FL USA
rayannis@webtv.net

Jibla attack:

Why neglect the main cause

I noticed that, in your article about the assassination of the three missionaries, you neglected to mention that the killer did his evil deed precisely and specifically because they were Christians. Why did you omit this important point? Is it because you want to hide the real cause of this act?

Those Muslims who deplore this act, once again, remain silent. Where is your outcry? Are you bullied into silence by the fringe elements of your religion? Where is your backbone? Where is your outrage?

So far, I have yet to read an article in any publication about "militant Christians" murdering Muslims. This is because Christians win people to God by loving them, just as Jesus Christ did. Militant Muslims, conversely, "win victories for Allah" by murder. The irony is magnificent.

Bob Fritz
edclub@bww.com

Jibla tragedy

Can you enlighten me?

I have read the news reports regarding the incident in Jibla. Not just USA reports but reports from media in Europe and the Arab world.

Each have shown the quote from the assailant that his reason for shooting the people was to "cleanse his religion and get closer to Allah."

I have a question, is this how your

God Allah rewards those who sacrifice the comfort of living in their own country near their own loved ones to help and in some cases save the lives and suffering of your children, mothers and loved ones?

I just don't understand, can you or your readers enlighten me.

Ron Ellis
Las Vegas, NV USA
Roninlv@aol.com

Murder of Jibla doctors: Not of Islam

I have just read the headlines on my browser about three American missionaries being shot.

I do not know for certain who the owner of this newspaper is, Muslim or other, but hopefully my opinion will count. Must be another God from the one that I know.

Not to say that all Christians are Christ like, but if they aren't, I would be the first to condemn their actions if it were in the reverse.

Muslims are free to worship, witness to others, or whatever they so desire in this country, so long as it does not involve terrorism.

So long as any members of the Muslim faith see killing, or any acts of terrorism, as the way to advance the Muslim cause, I say to other Muslims that you should condemn these and root them out of your midst.

I see no way for this to improve your image or draw you closer to God.

If this is what Muhammad taught, then you are definitely in for a long winter as they say.

Otis N. Bledsoe
obledsoe@bellsouth.net

Russians win ice dance

BY JUSTIN PALMER

MALMO, Sweden (Reuters) - World champions Irina Lobacheva and Ilya Averbukh have secured their first European ice dancing title after sweeping all three phases of the competition.

The Russian husband and wife team, bronze medallists on three occasions, sealed gold on Friday with an electric rock & roll medley that earned two perfect 6.0s in the free dance.

"It was wonderful. The audience carried us throughout the whole programme," said Averbukh.

"We worked a lot, because we didn't skate so well in our last two competitions."

Bulgaria's Albena Denkova and Maxim Stavitski took silver to win the country's first-ever medal at the championships, while bronze went to Tatiana Navka and Roman Kostomarov from Russia.

Earlier, Yevgeny Plushenko, the hot favourite to win the men's crown for the third time, duly won the short programme to put him in pole position going into Saturday's free skate, the final event of the week-long championships.

The 2002 champion Alexei Yagudin, who dominated the sport last year by also winning Olympic gold and the world championships, is not competing in Malmo due to injury.

Lobacheva and Averbukh proved a class above their rivals, winning the compulsory and original dance sections before a rousing free dance that had the crowd clapping along from the start.

Sporting fluorescent lemon and black outfits, the pair dazzled with an array of strong lifts, spins and twists as Little Richard and Elvis Presley boomed around a packed Malmo ice stadium.

The Russians, Olympic silver medallists in Salt Lake, punched the air with delight after their marks flashed up.

"As world champions, we're the leaders of the sport," added Averbukh, who admitted the couple still had to improve.

"We want to have more speed and to skate cleaner. It's hard to do all these steps at high speed."

Hesitant start
Plushenko, the European champion



Russia's Irina Lobacheva and Ilya Averbukh perform during the free dance in the ice dancing competition at the European figure skating championships in Malmo January 24, 2003. Lobacheva and Averbukh finished first and became European Champions. REUTERS/Paolo Cocco

in 2000 and 2001 but absent through injury last year, began his short programme in hesitant fashion, completing only a single jump on an intended triple toe loop.

The 20-year-old blamed the error on a small hole in the ice.

"It was very unexpected," he said. "Usually these holes should be filled with ice and then resurfaced. It happens sometimes, but rarely."

However, he recovered sufficiently to land the rest of his jumps cleanly and scored highly for presentation, his usual display of artistry earning 5.8 and 5.9s.

"I'm pleased with the rest of my programme. I did everything else well," he added.

Plushenko's main rival for gold, Frenchman Brian Joubert, lies second.

The charismatic 18-year-old, bronze medallist last year, had the crowd on his side throughout an energetic routine to Time by Pink Floyd, although he did fall on his opening quadruple toe loop.

"I didn't have enough speed going into the combination," he said. "I'll land it in the free skating. I can motivate myself again."

Russia's Ilya Klimkin, a former world junior champion, is in third place.

Serena achieves historic slam sweep

An epic showdown

BY OSSIAN SHINE

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Serena Williams has etched her name in tennis history, beating sister Venus for her first Australian Open and completing a sweep of the slams.

The siblings had spent Saturday morning lying on a bed watching cartoons together, but in the afternoon Serena battled to an emotional 7-6 3-6 6-4 victory to become only the fifth woman to hold all four grand slams at once - a feat she is calling the 'Serena slam'.

"I never get emotional, but I am really, really emotional now and really, really happy," the world number one said as tears rolled down her cheeks.

"You know all my life I have dreamed of being the best and doing the best. It hasn't always been easy for me and it is just so special the fact that I am making history right now."

The 21-year-old picked up A\$1.13 million for her victory and joins Maureen Connolly, Margaret Court, Martina Navratilova and Steffi Graf in an exclusive pantheon of champions.

Court, Navratilova and Graf were all in Melbourne to witness the newest member of the grand slam club.

"Winning four in a row... It doesn't happen every day. I can't believe I can now be compared to these women because they are just the greats. To be in their category is just amazing."

"I don't know if I can ever live up to their achievements. I have never celebrated a grand slam victory before. Maybe that will change today."

Less palatable

Venus, Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion in 2000 and 2001, claimed a less palatable slice of history, becoming the first woman to lose in the final of four successive grand slams, beaten on each occasion by Serena.

"I've been really happy this week. I wish I could have won today but you have a great champion in Serena," she smiled afterwards.

"She's now won all four grand slams and that's something I sure would love to do one day... yeah, be just like her." As Melbourne roasted in tempera-



Serena (R) and Venus Williams of the United States pose before the start of the women's final at the Australian Open in Melbourne January 25. REUTERS/Peter Jones

tures topping 40 degrees Celsius, the sisters took to the centre court with the roof closed - the first time in the tournament's history an entire final has been played indoors - after organisers took the decision to protect the players' health.

Before they could begin, Serena handed her sister a racket after stringers had put the wrong one in her bag.

Unlike so many of their previous 10 affairs, nervous, edgy encounters, this one was of the highest quality throughout.

Against each other they brought out the big guns, weapons unneeded in earlier rounds.

But facing each other across the net the full armoury was on display as the sisters went at each other with venom.

"Venus... be the meanest," one wag in the crowd called before another hollered "come on Sezzzer," to Serena as the Australian Open got its first taste of the razzmatazz of an all-Williams

grand slam final.

Combative women

After an opening couple of games, where the sisters searched each other for any sign of weakness, Serena broke in the fourth game, swatting a salvo of high forehand winners to stretch into a lead.

Strains of the British national anthem 'God Save the Queen' drifted over from the neighbouring Melbourne Cricket Ground where England were preparing to take on Australia and echoed round Rod Laver Arena.

Serena swept from side to side, swiping the ball with all her might, crashing away a forehand winner just as the words "long to reign over us..." rang out.

A sign, a prediction or a simply a bald statement of fact it was a sentiment applicable to both sisters, head and shoulders in front of the rest of the sport.

The once-giggling girls, uneasy con-

fronting each other, have grown into fearless combative women, each out for herself, capable of forgetting family love when on the court.

Venus, without a grand slam title since the 2001 U.S. Open, struck back immediately, breaking when Serena pushed a forehand beyond the baseline.

Four games later Venus had the chance to break again. She converted on her third break point when Serena netted a forehand, the top seed throwing her racket to the side of the court before burying her head in her hands.

She refused to buckle, though, and pulled level at 6-6 with some courageous tennis before streaking into a 5-1 lead in the tiebreak.

Mini revival

From having the opening set within her grasp, Venus was facing the loss of it and despite a mini-revival, lost 7-4 when another forehand flew long.

Serena clenched her fist, skipped on the spot and raced back to her seat as Venus sloped back to hers, ruining the missed opportunity.

Determined to make amends she tightened her forehand and the rewards were immediate. She broke in the fifth game and it was enough to see her level, winning the set 6-3.

It was only the third time in their 11 meetings that a match had gone to three sets. On the previous two occasions - both in 1999 - the player who won the first set won the match.

It looked as though that pattern would again repeat as Serena broke at the start of the decider for a 2-0 lead when Venus took her eye off the ball.

But Venus broke back as the momentum switched once more. In the eighth game Serena again mounted an effort to finish off her sibling but somehow Venus held on, staving off five break points to level 4-4.

Serena was looking stronger on her serve and Venus's features crumpled into a frustrated frown as she struggled to read the delivery.

The next game Venus's delivery finally crumbled under the weight of pressure and Serena sealed her historic victory in two hours 22 minutes.

NON SEQUITUR BY WILEY



7-Day Weather Forecast

Sana'a		Aden	
Day	Hi Lo	Day	Hi Lo
Mon	26 6	Mon	29 21
Tue	26 6	Tue	29 22
Wed	26 6	Wed	29 22
Thu	26 6	Thu	28 22
Fri	26 6	Fri	31 20
Sat	26 6	Sat	29 19
Sun	26 6	Sun	29 19



THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY BY Eugenia Last

Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)
Your ability to see all sides of an issue will be helpful. Don't hesitate to voice your opinion; however, be sure that you aren't being pushy.

Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)
Make pleasing changes to your living quarters. You may have to help older relatives with their financial concerns or personal papers.

Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20)
Educational courses will turn into a form of entertainment for you. You will meet a potential new mate while attending lectures.

Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22)
Don't go off on a spending spree. Be cautious and make price comparisons. Your emotional partner will give you a hard time if you have been too busy.

Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22)
Include the whole family when making decisions about your home. Don't make assumptions about what anyone else thinks. Clear up misconceptions by communicating.

Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22)
It's time to do a major cleaning of your house and all of your personal papers. Check to all your policies and financial documents; you may want to get some legal advice.

Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)
Your gift for seeing both sides of any situation will help you keep the peace. Although you will enjoy being appreciated, don't take on too much.

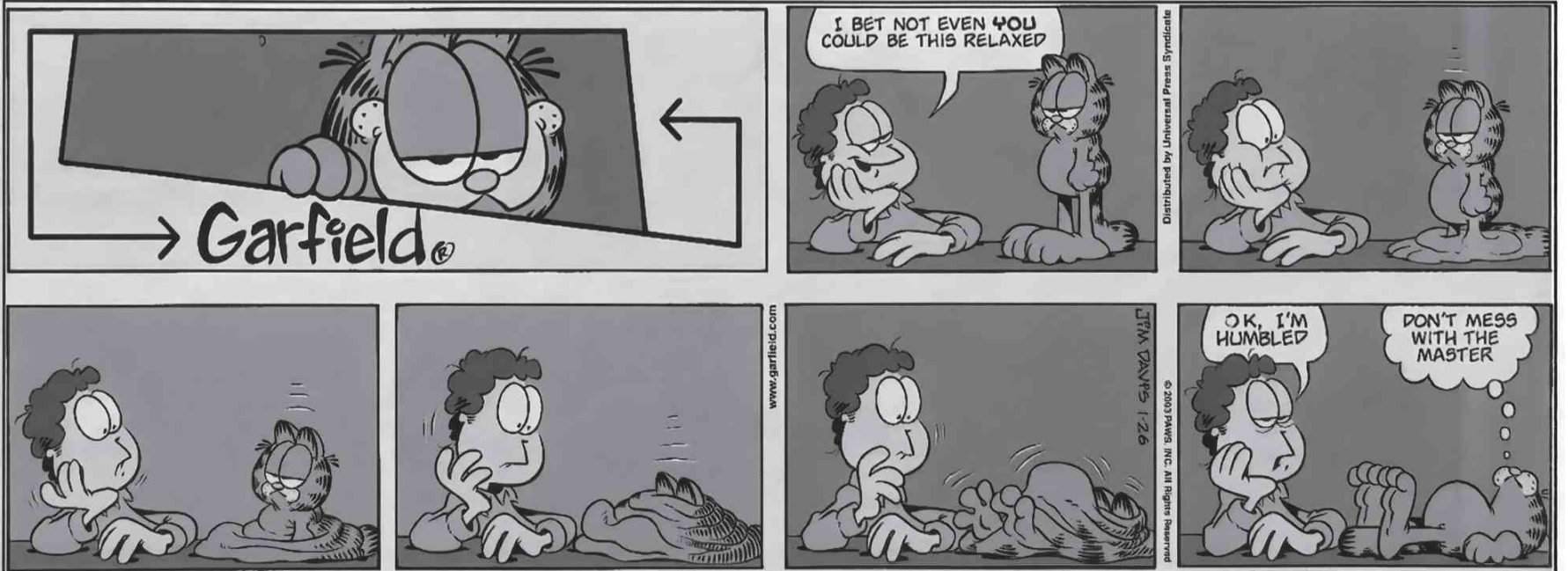
Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)
Your creative way of communicating will help keep you out of trouble. Your lover will be more than receptive if you say the right thing. Think carefully before you speak.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)
Direct your energy into competitive sports events, socializing with friends, or improving your residence. Include family members in whatever you do.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)
It's time for you to get out there and socialize. Romantic involvement will develop through new friendships. Contribute your knowledge.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)
Your desire for freedom and travel may cause more of a dilemma than you anticipated. Make sure all your documents are in order. Difficulties in foreign countries and with authority figures will surface.

Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20)
You will face emotional discord if you have neglected your personal responsibilities. Don't take on other people's problems and, whatever you do, avoid gossip.



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I. What to Say

Situations and expressions (39):
Food habits

There are different ways of describing food habits of people. We also sometimes relate people's appearance to their food habits. Let's cast a cursory glance at some of the expressions used for this purpose.

- He is **on diet**.
- I have been medically advised to **go on diet**.
- As part of a health drive he is on a **calorie-controlled diet**.
- If you are so **fastidious and choosy** about your food, you may face problems.
- He has a **sweet tooth**. That explains his **obesity**.
- Lover of food as he is, he naturally likes **varied cuisine**.
- He **masticates** food; naturally he has no digestion problems.
- Due to overeating, sedentary habits and lack of exercise, he has **put on weight**.
- He looks **under-nourished** as he is very casual about his meals.
- **Malnutrition** in the formative years stifles growth of children.
- In order to be **well-nourished**, you need to be on a **balanced diet**.
- He is **moderate** in his food habits. That's the secret of his youthful looks.
- Being a glutton and a huge feeder, he has a **baunch** like that of Falstaff.
- My wife has an obsession for **junk food**. So it's a small wonder, she has chronic stomach ailment.
- **Vegetarianism** ensures longer life span.
- He is a confirmed **non-vegetarian**.

2. apartheid
3. a priori
4. a posteriori
5. apropos

Answers to last week's questions

1. **a la carte** (French) (adj) (menu where each dish has its own separate price): We ordered for an a la carte menu.
2. **alma mater** (Lat) (the school or university where a person was taught): We hold our almatmater in high esteem.
3. **Anno Domini** (Lat) (shortened to A. D.: in the year of our Lord): In 1990 A.D. the unification of North and South Yemen was achieved.
4. **ante meridiem** (Lat) (shortened to a.m.): The college begins at 8 a.m.

C) Words commonly confounded

Bring out differences in meaning of the following pairs of words:

1. award, reward
2. angry, annoyed, furious, irritated
3. baby, child, infant

Answers to last week's questions

1. **cavalry** (n) (soldiers who fight on horse back): The king attacked the enemies with his cavalry.
- infantry** (n) (foot soldiers): They chased the rebels with two regiments of infantry.
2. **cease** (vt) (stop an activity): The factory has ceased to manufacture cars.
- seize** (vt) (take possession of property by law): The court seized all his movable and immovable assets due to non-payment of debt.
3. **ceiling** (n) (the inner surface of the top of a room): We fixed a ceiling fan in our living room.
- roof** (n) (the top covering of a building, bus, car or tent). The roof of the house needs repair.
- shilling** (n) (British coin worth twelve pennies, one-twentieth of a pound): He bought as much as a shilling can buy.
4. **cell** (n) (a small room for one person): The prisoner died in his cell.
- shell** (n) (hard outer cover of some animals): The snail is inside the shell.

D) Idioms and phrases

Use the following phrases in sentences so as to illustrate their meanings:

1. For the time being.
2. Beyond belief.
3. As sound as a bell.
4. Bell the cat.
5. Bellow out.

Answers to last week's questions

1. **on behalf of** (in the interest of): I spoke on behalf of my colleagues.
2. **behave oneself** (show good manners): You should behave yourself.
3. **put somebody on his best behavior** (advise or warn him to behave well): I have tried to put him on his best behavior.
4. **lag behind** (fail to keep up): We should march forward and not lag behind others.
5. **come into being** (begin to exist): No one knows when the world came into being.

IV. Grammar and composition

A) Grammar

Choose the correct word or phrase

1. I didn't enjoy this book on management. It wasn't very _____.
(poorly written/well-typed/well written)

2. I learned a lot about how to stop worrying and start living by reading that book. I found it very _____.
(clever/entertaining/informative)

3. Saif has so many interesting ideas, and he's always thinking new projects. He is very _____.
(dynamic/patient/tough)
4. She is so _____ a salesperson that she sells three times as much as her co-workers.
(friendly/good looking/persuasive)
5. He works out at the gym everyday. So he really looks _____.
(athletic/risky/useful)
6. For a restaurant to succeed, it has to _____ a high level of quality in both food and service.
(give/have/had)
7. If a departmental store improves its _____ and looks really attractive, it can attract a lot of new customers.
(boutique/décor/safety record)

Answers to last week's questions

1. **In order to** speak a foreign language well, it's a good idea to use the language as often as possible.
2. **In order for** a movie to be entertaining, it has to have good actors and an interesting story.
3. **In order to** succeed in any job, you have to work hard.
4. **In order to** cultivate good reading habits, one should be interested in books.
5. **In order for** a restaurant to be popular, it has to make available delicious food at reasonable prices.
6. **In order for** a book to be successful, it needs to be well-written and informative.

B) Composition

Expand the idea contained in the proverb:
"Fortune favours the brave"

Answer to last week's question:

A ROLLING STONE GATHERS NO MOSS

The term 'rolling stone' stands for a person who is frequently changing his place of profession. Just as a stone that is continually rolling does not gather any moss on it, similarly a person who is constantly changing his occupation doesn't succeed in making any achievement. Acquisition of wealth or learning or experience requires time as well as steady and prolonged application of energy to some task. People who succeed in life are not necessarily extraordinarily gifted or brilliant, and those who fail are not always dullards and dunces.

The truth of the matter is that those who are perseverant and patient gain their objective, whereas those who are impatient of delay and leave one job for another in order to get quick success are disappointed. The ones who jump from job to job succeed nowhere. It is, therefore, advisable that we should not be impatient to delay, but work patiently.

V. Pearls from the Holy Quran



VI. Words of Wisdom

"A happy family is but an earlier heaven."
—Bowring

Words and their architects:

Men behind the words



BY DR. MAHMUDUL HASANI
Head, Department of English,
University of Science &
Technology,
Sanaa, Republic of Yemen.

"Words are like leaves and where they most abound
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found."

So said John Dryden, the well-known English poet and satirist of the seventeenth century. There are, however, words which have interesting history of their own. There are words which once used to be men with flesh and blood—men who survive as mere words. Doesn't it sound like some gibberish, some riddle or enigma? Well, think of the origin of words like 'sandwich' and 'boycott'. How did these words come into being? You will be surprised to know that both Sandwich and Boycott were persons like you and me. Let's find out how and why they became words.

Charles C. Boycott was the estate agent of the Earl of Erne in County Mayo, Ireland. The earl was one of the absentee landowners who, as a group, held most of the land in Ireland. Boycott was chosen in 1880 to be the test case for a new policy advocated by Charles Parnell, an Irish politician who wanted land reform. Parnell urged that any landlord who would not charge lower rents or any tenant who took over the farm of an evicted tenant should be given the complete cold shoulder. Boycott, a former British soldier, refused to charge lower rents and ejected his tenants. Boycott and his family found themselves without servants, farmhands, service in stores, or mail delivery. Boycott's name was quickly adopted as the term for this treatment, not just in English, but in French, Dutch, German, and Russian as well. Now 'to boycott' means 'to act together in abstaining from using, buying or dealing with as an expression of protest or disfavour or as a means of coercion.'

Now everybody knows what a sandwich means. But where did the word

come from? It is after John Montagu, the 4th Earl of Sandwich (1718-92). In order not to have to leave the gambling table for having his lunch, the earl used to eat slices of bread with a filling placed between them. People eat sandwich everywhere in the world but few know how and why the thing got its name.

We prefer pasteurized milk. The word 'pasteurize' is after Louis Pasteur (1822-95), the French chemist who invented the process of pasteurization and developed vaccines for anthrax and rabies.

'To bowdlerize' means to expurgate or to remove erroneous, vulgar, obscene, or otherwise objectionable material (from a book etc.) before publication. The word is now used for negative connotations. The man behind this word is Thomas Bowdler (1754-1825), who expurgated Shakespeare's plays in a prudish way.

'Macadam' and 'tarmacadam' are called so after John L. Mc Adam (1756-1836), Scottish engineer. Macadam means 'pavements of layers of compacted broken stone, now usually bound with tar or asphalt.'

Sadism is a psychological disorder in which sexual gratification is derived from infliction of pain on others. The word comes from the name of Marquis de Sade (1740-1814), the French writer of works characterized by such tendencies. Masochism is the opposite of sadism. It is a psychological disorder in which sexual pleasure is derived from being physically or emotionally offended, dominated or mistreated. The word is after Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1836-95), the Austrian novelist who created character having such mental aberrations.

The list of words is not very long. How would the Earl of Sandwich react to the global popularity of sandwich if he were alive today. Would he understand the expression: 'The rickshaw was sandwiched between two cars.' Mr. Boycott would certainly be pleased to find politicians and diplomats talking of boycotting foreign goods. Every word has an interesting story of its origin beneath its meaning and connotations.

TIMES Quiz 53

Tick the most appropriate choices

1. There is a difference of color in artificial light as compared to natural light because
 - a) Artificial light does not get reflected
 - b) Artificial light absorbs many colors
 - c) Artificial light is not pure and is deficient in one or more colors.
 - d) None of these
2. The diaphragm of the microphone of a telephone is made of
 - a) Silicon
 - b) Lead
 - c) Carbon
 - d) Mica
3. In which trophic level are green plants found?
 - a) Second
 - b) Third
 - c) First
 - d) Complete food chain
4. A group of genetically identical cells or organisms produced asexually
 - a) from a common ancestor are
 - b) heteromorphs
 - c) clones
 - d) isozymes
5. What does the abbreviation RFC stand for?

Answers to Times Quiz 52

1. **Troposphere** is the lowest level of the atmosphere of the earth.
2. **Sargassum** is not a fungus.
3. The degeneracy of the genetic code means that the same amino acid may be coded by two or more codes.
4. Lab tests for AIDS is actually a test for specific antibodies in the blood against HIV virus.
5. The acronym RADIUS stands for Remote Authentication Dial-in User Service.

YOUTH FORUM

The Martyr
Beside him, she said,
Good bye, son, good bye, my soul
Are you leaving me so soon?
Smiling he answered,
Don't cry, mom, but say, I am proud of you now.
Prophet Muhammed is there, mom
He's looking at me

He's greeting me
I am waiting mom
In paradise mom.
The martyr is ever alive.

Buthaina Jamil
Level 4, English Department
University of science and Technology,
Sana'a

WONDERWORD by DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: First read the list of words, then look at the puzzle. The words are in all directions—vertically, horizontally, diagonally, backward. Circle each letter of a word found and strike it off the list. The letters are often used more than once, so do not cross them out. It is best to find the big words first. When you find all the words listed in the clues, you'll have a number of letters left over that spell the Wonderword.

- CLUES**
- | | | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|--------------|---------|
| Adjust | Doubles | Liquid | Preservative | Soak |
| Alloy | Drain | Mail | Print | Stiff |
| Array | Drop-off | Manipulate | Professional | Stores |
| Bath | Film | Matte | Proofs | Strip |
| Beaker | Fixers | Meld | Repair | Tanning |
| Bright | Fluid | Natural | Resolution | Tests |
| Burnt | Formal | Negative | Result | Tiered |
| Celluloid | Formula | Neutralize | Reveal | Timer |
| Chemicals | Frame | Offer | Rinse | Trays |
| Color | Gloss | Opaque | Roll | Trim |
| Compounds | Glow | Order | Salts | Tubs |
| Count | Grains | Pale | Seal | Wash |
| Create | Heat | Paper | Separate | Water |
| Crop | Image | Peel | Service | White |
| Dark | Lamps | Phase | Sheets | Widest |
| Deposits | Layer | Pictures | Silver | Wiping |
| Dilute | Layout | Plate | Size | Work |
| Divide | Light | Platter | Slides | |

DEVELOPING FILM Solution: 8 letters

T	E	D	A	F	S	P	M	E	T	A	E	R	C	S	H	E	E	T	S
W	N	V	L	R	K	T	I	M	E	R	Z	S	E	R	C	W	N	S	T
D	I	U	I	R	E	I	R	C	P	O	I	A	E	O	I	I	A	T	A
O	I	P	O	T	L	M	T	I	H	L	K	L	O	R	I	N	S	E	
D	G	O	I	C	A	A	T	S	P	U	A	O	E	P	I	S	E	E	H
D	N	R	L	N	P	G	R	U	D	E	R	S	T	D	P	L	A	T	E
R	I	C	G	U	G	E	E	U	B	N	T	E	E	H	B	A	S	U	D
A	N	V	A	L	L	O	Y	N	T	S	U	R	S	U	G	C	L	L	E
I	N	O	I	E	O	L	R	E	O	A	E	O	O	L	L	I	E	I	P
N	A	E	R	D	V	W	E	S	U	I	N	D	P	A	A	M	R	D	O
T	T	T	D	E	I	T	C	T	Q	T	L	B	M	N	E	E	B	S	
A	H	S	L	A	E	T	T	A	M	O	A	U	G	P	O	H	V	T	I
L	L	G	U	U	L	R	A	R	E	R	P	L	S	I	C	L	S	T	
U	S	I	I	J	S	U	L	E	V	N	D	E	O	O	S	A	I	F	S
M	L	O	Q	L	D	E	P	E	T	R	A	Y	S	F	S	Z	S	I	E
R	P	A	A	U	A	A	R	I	O	F	E	N	S	F	E	E	L	X	R
O	E	Y	M	K	I	Y	O	P	N	R	I	S	I	E	F	L	R	E	V
F	E	T	K	R	A	D	O	H	T	A	B	L	E	R	O	I	P	R	I
R	L	M	A	O	O	F	F	U	R	M	M	Y	A	R	R	A	T	S	C
E	T	I	H	W	F	F	S	G	T	E	T	A	R	A	P	E	S	S	E

ANSWER NEXT WEEK Last Week's Answer: Deliveries

Readers' Forum

An open letter to Dr. M. N. K. Bose regarding "A letter to teachers"

Dear Dr. Bose,
Greatly thrilled I was when I read the very insightfully written pieces of letters that you wrote to the teachers of English about teaching techniques in classrooms. As a school teacher, I received the letter-like articles with a lot of enthusiasm. So I send you my thanks and appreciation for the valuable pieces of advice that you so skillfully delivered on the basis of years of your experience in the field. My colleagues and I have been looking forward to reading and enjoying more and more guidelines on how to be more active and creative teachers in our

classes.
Sir, I am not exaggerating when I say that many teachers like me are shocked to find in the first year of their teaching, that what they were taught in colleges were only a number of theories that can hardly be used in their classes with their students. However, your letters in the YT, carried so important points about the use of some aids in classrooms, in addition to how a teacher should treat his/her students.
So I would like you to generously keep giving us useful tips about the newest teaching technology in future as well.
Professionally yours,
Khalid Ali Al-Quzahy
Al-Fawz school, Mahweet

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فندق عدن
رائد الضيافة في اليمن

Aden Hotel celebrates 2003

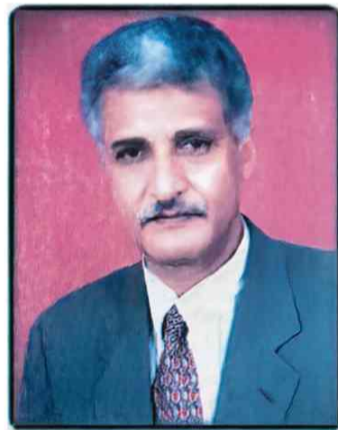
Aden Hotel held its annual ceremony staff party on Jan. 5 to honor its employees. A number of politicians and businessmen joined the hotel's employees during the ceremony. Fadel AL-Hilali, General Manager of the hotel, said "Today we celebrate all those who belong to this tourist establishment in the beautiful city of Aden. Aden Hotel has achieved a good reputation and international status along with great success that is because of you and your sincere efforts."

He pointed to the success and serious efforts that Sheik Mohammed Abdlqawi AL -Muflahi exerted. "In spite of being busy he preferred to share you this day, and thank everyone who participated, and he is still bringing the tourism movement in Aden, the beautiful city, in to view."

He also pointed that all hotel employees have been offered full care and attention. He delivered his greetings and regards to all the companies that sponsored this ceremony hoping that 2003 will encourage the employees to exert more efforts and work harder.

Fadel Saaid, Deputy Manager, added, "Today we celebrate as our hotel achieves tangible improvements through its special tourist services. Our visitors have witnessed and have a good impression that reflects the tourist experience and high qualification that our staff have. We are very proud of the fulfilled success in promoting tourism in Aden. This hotel is one of the signposts of Aden and in Yemen in general." He concluded that 2003 will be more active and energetic.

In a statement to the Yemen Times, Sheik Mohammed Abdulqawi AL-Muflahi, owners representative said,, "It is my pleasure to share with my brothers and sons their happiness in their annual ceremony in which they are honored. Experienced and qualified employees are traits of the Aden Hotel, which is considered a tourist stand for Aden. In spite of the difficult conditions that Yemen has gone through, and the small number of tourists, we are here to promote and activate the tourism industry. We all have to pay more attention to this field that will certainly supply us with revenues. He pointed out that Yemen's tourism is greatly supported by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who enjoys spending his vacation in Aden.



Mr. Mohammed AL-Muflahi



Mr. Fadel AL-Hilali



Mr. Fadel Saaid



Aden Hotel In Breif

Aden Hotel is considered one of the famous hotels in Yemen and has a prime tourist location amidst the center of Aden City. Moreover its architecture and designs attract any visitor to Aden as well as its manifold Arabic and foreign delicious food that have everyone's admiration. It has spacious single and double rooms, and suits to host well-known personalities. The hotel contains conference halls with the latest technical equipment to host conferences and workshops. It has a wedding hall as well. The hotel also organizes land and sea cruises.

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Ancient Sabaean gold mine discovery

So this is where Queen Sheba got her gold!

By HASSAN AL-ZAIDI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Al-Makhdara is a small uninhabited historical town located below Mount Hailan a few kilometers to the west of Marib City, where an American company has recently crowned its year-long exploration with a discovery of a gold mine. It is said that the mine dates back to the Sabaean times in the 6th century BC. The place is full of rock piles of various types designed in circular shapes. Historians say that these are tombs of the old Sheba kingdom. Yet the locals of the area insist that these sites were built around 570 AD by the Ethiopian king who used them as a shield to protect him from the 'Ababee' birds that attacked him and his elephants upon his attempt to demolish the holy Kaaba in Mecca City as narrated in the Holy Quran.

In contrast to this claim, explorations indicate that the area was actually one of the largest Sabaean mines in the area and was once full of gold and precious gems.

Deep underground caves that capacitate more than a square kilometer of land

have also been discovered. The various holes in the ground in different places of the town confirm the theory of the gold mine. There are also several settings of rocks that seem to have been forming a filtering device that would separate gold from other waste by burning mine excavations.

The discovery also shows that Sabaeans used highly sophisticated tools to extract gold from the mines. To shape the gems, they used sharp tools and complex equipment that was not known by many at the time.

On the other hand, curious villagers in the area discovered remains of ashes in some of the rock piles, adding to the strength of the conclusion that these piles were used as furnaces for melting the extracted gold.

An interesting fact is that the 80-kilometer road leading to the old Sabaean Capital Sirwah starts from this particular site, and that this road remains paved with stones and rocks until today.

Not to mislead our reader, we need to emphasize that almost everything that was in this mine was found except one thing: the gold! The question of whether there is any gold left from that era still remains.



Archaeological works in one of the pits al-Malkhdara area, Marib governorate

Another question that could be raised at this time would be "what about the tourist value of the discovery?" Al-Makhdara could be one of the links in the Sheba Kingdom mystery's chain. So will there be any positive response from the concerned authorities in the ministry of tourism or any governmental body regarding this discovery?

According to the villagers, Yemen Times was the first newspaper to explore this area and reveal those astonishing facts about the discovery. However, the paper has also found another site that is not less important. It is remarkable to know that in such a dry governorate, there is currently a sulfur-rich spring near the site of the discovery, which villagers say has been flowing non-stop throughout the last century or more and has been effective in curing many skin diseases. Hence, villagers come from all over the governorate to enjoy bathing in those warm and 'healthy' springs.

The journey to Al-Makhdara, which is only 3 kilometers away of the main highway between Marib and Sana'a was an enjoyable endeavor full of great experience to discover and appreciate the greatness of our ancestors whose civilizations and power was beyond imagination. It is sad however that the area is totally ignored - as villagers confirm - by the government and tourist agencies, resulting in

a great economical potential being lost in front of our own naked eyes. It is a pity that our ancestors who were able to build dams and great cities would not be proud of our conditions today!

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Address by the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam on the eve of Republic Day- 2003

Developed India: Vision and Actions



Mere pyare Bharatvasiyan, mera namaskar.

On the eve of the 54th Republic Day of India I greet all the billion people of our country living in India and abroad. I also greet the members of the armed forces and paramilitary forces who guard our frontiers on the land, the sea and the air.

Meeting the People

During the past six months I visited 17 states. I had the opportunity to interact with a very large cross section of people, majority of them were young. I also had occasion to visit a large number of rural and drought affected areas and I could share the concerns, grief and also aspirations of the people living there. I also met a number of leaders, spiritual personalities, artistes, craftspeople, grass-root innovators and social workers among others.

I am happy to share with you that I have already met and interacted with more than a hundred thousand children. I was asking myself what I gained out of these interactions. In spite of flood, drought, drinking water scarcity, poverty and societal instability in few places, everywhere I could see the unabated enthusiasm of the young for learning. Learning should bring out the spirit of creativity in the young minds. Creativity gives knowledge. Knowledge is indeed an asset for the nation. I recall a question raised by a Nagaland student when I visited Tuensang, "Mr. President, I want to live in an India which is prosperous, happy and safe. Tell us how we will be guided to such an India? How can I contribute for achieving this?" Such questions from young minds made me feel proud as an Indian as they are thinking about their future and that of the country, where they are living now and where they will work in the future. They are ready to contribute their mite in the journey of transformation of our country to a 'developed' nation. It is, therefore, essential to evolve action-plans to guide, motivate and effectively utilize the power of the younger generation to progress in all our endeavors.

PROGRESS Science and Technology

On my recent visits to research laboratories, I could see our young scientists ceaselessly working in bio-technology and other emerging fields of bio-medical engineering to unearth the mysteries of human creation and the characteristics embedded in the DNA structure for providing better healthcare to humanity. That filled my mind with hope and re-assurance that such research will ensure that we will be part of the human endeavor to provide quality health care, diagnosis and treatment.

Our space missions have demonstrated the high calibre scientific and technological inputs in transforming research to applications resulting in benefit to our country. My felicitations to our space scientists and their partner institutions and industries for achieving a series of successful launches and orbiting satellites for various applications. I am sure our scientists and technicians will march ahead in delivering higher pay load in the orbit for the given take-off weight with cost effective solutions for applications like solar energy exploitation.

Our defence scientists have proved themselves again by realizing powerful systems for strategic applications. Also we



Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, President of India



A.B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister



Yashwant Singha, Minister of External Affairs

have force-multiplied our defence systems with electronic warfare capabilities, radars, under water sensors and weapons. Our nuclear scientists are currently constructing eight nuclear power reactors, the highest number of units that are being constructed anywhere in the world this year. Sea water desalination plant at Kalpakkam has also commenced operation.

Natural resources and human resources are our core competencies. Particularly, the rich bio-diversity is the wealth of our nation. Herbal research has to lead from molecule to drug. Integrated efforts on mission mode have to be further strengthened by academia, R&D labs and industries so that cost effective medicines are available to the people and the export potential is also increased. Trained cadre of human resource has to be created for reinforcing employment potential and thereby spurring economic growth. In this context, I am happy to know that a major mission has been launched for cultivation of bamboo and increasing products made from bamboo.

I was recently in Kolkata interacting with 9000 children at the Netaji Indoor Stadium. One boy suffering from visual impairment asked me, "Sir, what kind of education facilities are provided in the Knowledge Society, for visually handicapped children like me?" There are many like him. Let me share one thought with you. I had met many physically and mentally challenged children at Rashtrapati Bhavan and also during my visits to various States. My belief all along was reconfirmed that these children like all others have an equal urge to pursue their studies and work. We have to provide solutions to their problems with the aid of Information Technology, by developing audio books, talking websites, voice assistive interfaces and other devices. Public buildings and educational institutions need to provide friendly facilities that offer easy access and reach.

Recently, I had an occasion to meet a group of people from International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) along with several Indian teams who are working on the development of HIV/AIDS vaccine. This programme is very vital for the nation for preventing HIV cases in future. This challenge needs an accelerated and time bound action.

Our people have started seeing the benefits of Information and Communication Technologies. Reaching the target of nearly 10 billion dollars in exporting software development has increased the opportunity for our youngsters. The economic slow down in the West and events like September 11, have not affected our industry drastically. India has also responded well to the wireless revolution and today we see the cell phone

penetration on a steady increase – a sign of good economic growth. The convergence of ICT, nano technology and biological sciences is in the horizon. India is even better placed to exploit this revolution than any other nation.

Elections

India, as the largest democratic country can really be proud of the conduct of free and fair elections in Jammu & Kashmir and Gujarat. I compliment the exemplary performance of the Election Commission and the Central and State Government machineries. The media, the political parties and independent groups have also contributed to this process in spite of the passions of competitive politics. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have to be particularly congratulated for the immense courage they showed in upholding the democratic traditions in spite of cross border terrorism. People of our country have shown to the world that democratic traditions are deep rooted in our civilization and that is our strength. In fact all of us on this day should pledge ourselves to build upon this unique heritage.

Parliament and Vision of Developed India

It was indeed a tribute to our democratic parliamentary system that it has done exceptionally well in the 11th session of the 13th Lok Sabha. During that session, both Houses of the Parliament passed 42 Bills and I have accorded assent to 40 Bills that were sent to me so far. The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 passed by the Parliament, which makes free and compulsory education for children between the age group of 6 to 14 years as a fundamental right is particularly praiseworthy. I trust this tradition will continue and all our Members of Parliament will continue to excel themselves for the cause of national development.

Our Prime Minister, in his Independence Day address on 15th August 2002, announced that India would become a 'developed' nation by 2020. The National Development Council has since approved the 10th Five Year Plan with economic growth rate of 8%. It is equally gratifying that a task team has been formed by the Government for networking of rivers to transfer water from our surplus basins to areas of deficit. Considerable care, I am sure, will be taken about the environment and people related issues.

I am also sure that our Parliament, which is celebrating its Golden Jubilee, will discuss and evolve action plans for our vision of transforming India into a 'developed' nation by 2020.

Knowledge Society

During the last century, the world underwent a change from agriculture society, where manual labour was the critical factor, to industrial society where the management of technology, capital and labour provided the competitive advantage. Then the information era was born, where connectivity and software products drove a part of the economy of a few nations including our country. In the 21st century, a new society is emerging where knowledge is the primary production resource instead of capital and labour. Efficient utilisation of this existing knowledge can create comprehensive wealth for the nations and also improve the quality of life - in the form of better health, education, infrastructure and other social indicators. Ability to create and maintain the knowledge infrastructure, develop knowledge workers and enhance their productivity through creation, growth and exploitation of new knowledge will be the key factors in deciding the prosperity of this Knowledge Society. Whether a nation has arrived at the state of knowledge society is judged by the way the country effectively deals with knowledge creation and knowledge deployment in all sectors like IT, Industries, Agriculture, Health Care etc.

Second Green Revolution

It is the right time for India to embark upon the Second Green Revolution which will enable it to increase its productivity in the agricultural sector. The production of cereals needs to increase from the present 200 million tonnes to over 300 million tonnes by 2020 in view of population growth. But the requirement of land for the increasing population as well as for greater afforestation and environmental preservation activities would demand that the present 170 million hectares of arable land will have to be brought down to 100 million hectares by 2020. All our agricultural scientists and technologists have to work for doubling the productivity of the available land with lesser area being available for cultivation. The type of technologies needed would be in the areas of biotechnology, proper training to the farmers, additional modern equipments for preservation and storage etc. The second green revolution is indeed graduating from grain production to food processing and marketing as visualised by the late Shri. C.Subramaniam. While doing so, utmost care should be taken for various environmental and people related aspects leading to sustainable development.

Knowledge Powered PURA (Providing Urban amenities in Rural Areas)

More than two thirds of our billion population live in the rural parts of India. The vision of transformation to a 'developed' India can only be realized if we launch a mega mission for empowering the rural people. My visits to the rural parts of India have confirmed that the problem of rural India depends on the extent of connectivity available there. The connectivity that I refer to, would include four components. **Physical connectivity** by providing roads in rural areas, **electronic connectivity** by providing reliable communication network and **knowledge connectivity** by establishing more professional institutions and vocational training centers. Schools with best infrastructure and teachers who love teaching, primary health centres, silos for

On the occasion of Republic Day 2003, I congratulate all Indian nationals in the Republic of Yemen and wish them success, health and prosperity. I am thankful to the friendly people and the Government of the Republic of Yemen who wish India all well.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that India was the number one importer of Yemeni crude oil during the year 2001. Our exports to the Republic of Yemen have also increased considerably. Relations between Yemen and India at all levels – political, economic, social, and cultural – have been expanding for the mutual benefit and for the betterment of the peoples of the two friendly countries.

Once again I greet all my fellow citizens and PIO's in Yemen on this auspicious occasion.



Mohinder Singh Suman Ambassador of India to the Republic of Yemen

storage of products and markets for promoting cottage industries and business, employment opportunities for artisans are some of the elements of PURA. All this connectivity needs to be done in an integrated way so that **economic connectivity** will emerge leading to self actuating people and economy. Such Model of establishing a circular connectivity among the rural village complexes will accelerate rural development process by empowerment. I am sure that removal of poverty will call for Providing Urban amenities in Rural Areas (PURA). The model envisaged is a habitat design that would improve the quality of life in rural places and make special suggestions to remove urban congestion also. Instead of village population coming to urban area, the reverse phenomenon has to take place.

The PURA has to be a business proposition economically viable and managed by entrepreneurs and local people and small scale industrialists, as it involves education, health, power generation, transport and management. Government's support should be in the form of empowering such management agencies, providing initial economic support and finding the right type of management structure and leaders to manage and maintain.

Towards IT Enabled Administration

What type of scenario will be there in India in the coming decades? As we are crossing the information society and leading to knowledge society, irrespective of rural or urban area, distance will be shortened using information technology. In such a situation an electronic connectivity should emerge between the various State and Central Government Departments for fully committed transparent administration. A networked database with real time updated data exchange will ensure speedy service to the people under one roof for all their government/non-government service requirement. Transparency will have to emerge in governance.


Wherever I have been, I have seen that people definitely want to live in a prosperous India. In the rural area when I visited primary schools, they wanted high schools, when I visited High Schools they wanted Colleges, when I visited Colleges they wanted Professional Colleges. The right type of higher education has become an essentially from both the students' and parents' points of view. However, scarcity of good teachers is visible everywhere. Good teaching and interactive teaching are possible through tele-education and inspired teachers. Healthcare facilities for rural and remote villages can be provided

by Mobile Clinics. This is one example of extending the available limited facilities to more and more rural people. Both the centre and the state governments should encourage such mobile diagnostic and treatment clinics in rural areas on priority.

Conclusion

Dear citizens, I would like to conclude with a mission statement: **India can become a developed nation only if everyone contributes to the best of his or her ability and capacity.** The mission is: In transforming India into a developed nation by 2020, what can be the role of every citizen in addition to the governmental initiatives of launching programs for the vision of developed India. I have already explained that there has to be integrated development programmes with empowered management structure. In addition, I would like to suggest various missions for our people. For example, the student community can take up the task, during holidays to make a certain number of people literate in their area where their schools or houses are situated. Only a burning candle can light another. Teachers and parents can assist them in this task. The Government and R&D labs can provide technological upgradation to our small-scale industries so that production can be increased and be competitive. The youth would need to aspire for entrepreneurship rather than conventional employment. Large-scale industries have to increase their contribution to economic growth, particularly growth of GDP. Here, industries can concentrate on maximum output and cost effective products, so that demand will increase. They can aim at becoming multinational companies, for e.g. in the areas of sugar and agricultural products, power, cement, manufacturing and knowledge products institutions. The farming community, with advanced water conservation and management methods, has to increase their productivity. The Information Technology and knowledge workers have got a tremendous responsibility to contribute in the areas of tele-medicine, tele-education and e-governance for rural areas apart from their business role. In this vision period, the whole Government agency has to build a name for itself, by fast decision making and transparent administration. Media should become a partner and promoter critic in national development. This type of dynamic environment with motivation will indeed be a great foundation for our vision of transforming India into a 'developed' nation by 2020.

May God bless you.



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53rd Anniversary of India's Republic Day

A congratulation Message

On the auspicious occasion of the 53rd Republic Day of India, The 52nd Dai-al-Fatimi Dr. Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin and his followers in Yemen, extend their heartiest felicitations to India and its people throughout the world. His Holiness prays for both india's prosperity and also for a long lasting, cordial and brotherly relationship between India and Yemen.



Ajanta: Fine Example of Buddhist Art

"For this cause, adoration and praise (offered to Him) remains not without its reward, and yields great and abundant advantage; and if on that occasion even one flower be offered, it becomes the cause of reward called heaven and final liberations".

This is the inscription on Cave 26, at Ajanta in the state of Maharashtra, which also conveys that the monk Buddhahadra had ordered and provided for the cave's excavation in the late 5th century A.D. Earlier a merchant, Buddhahadra had renounced the world and retreated to Ajanta, probably with much of his wealth. And the inscription subtly indicates his purpose: if a flower offered by the devotee is rewarded, then a magnificent prayer-hall, embellished

EXT: BRINDA GILL*
PHOTOGRAPHS: SATYAJIT S. GILL

with paintings and sculptures depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha, would definitely bestow much merit on its donor. Reflective of the Buddhist philosophy they subscribed to, monarchs and merchants patronized the excavation of rock-cut sanctuaries. Thus, a row of elaborate and decorative Buddhist caves were cut into the secluded mountain face overlooking the sliver of the Waghora River at Ajanta in Maharashtra, and they offer one of the most interesting chapters of ancient Indian art history.

Over the centuries, after the Buddha's passing away around 486 B.C., councils were held to discuss different interpreta-

tions of his original message and philosophy. Differences in interpretation inevitably led to the emergence of different sects, and by the early centuries of the Christian Era, Mahayana Buddhism emerged with a philosophy that differed from the Hinayanas, who maintained that they followed the Buddha's teachings more closely. In art, the orthodox Hinayanas did not depict the Buddha in images, but only suggested his presence by symbols such as the horse (signifying his renunciation), Bodhi tree (his Enlightenment), the Wheel (his first sermon at the Deer Park at Sarnath) and the stupa (his final resting place). On the other hand, the Mahayanas found it acceptable to sculpt and paint the Buddha image, which opened up a glorious chapter in Indian art.

An important concept stressed by the Mahayanas was belief in the Bodhisattva, a spiritual being who defers his own Enlightenment, so that he can help humankind in their pursuit of self-realization. The Buddhists believed that before being born as Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha had passed through innumerable lives, in animal and human form, and the Mahayanas stressed the Buddha's role as a Bodhisattva, during which he took on the suffering of others and extended them guidance and compassion. Thus, the Mahayana belief (that stressed it was paramount to assist others in their quest) focused on a monastic organization rather than solitary asceticism and in turn led to the enlargement of single rock-cut cell retreats of ascetics to large rock-cut prayer halls and monasteries.

Further, the Mahayana belief that merit could be transferred from one person to another by a devout act, led wealthy merchants to bestow generous gifts on the Buddhist Sangha, an act that also helped them acquire merit. Donations also took the form of funding the excavation of chaityas or prayer-halls and viharas or monasteries.

As the Mahayanas believed that Bodhisattvas and the Buddha could be represented in images, these sanctuaries were graced with paintings and sculpture. And thus were bequeathed beautiful embellished chaityas and viharas at Ajanta, now a World Heritage Site as listed by the UNESCO. Of the 1,100 rock-cut caves in the country present in Orissa, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, about 900 are located in the Deccan of which a majority are Buddhist, and of these Ajanta stands apart for its artistic expression.

Cave 10, the earliest chaitya and possibly Ajanta's earliest excavation, bears paintings dated to the mid-second century B.C. and incorporate symbols of the Buddha such as the Bodhi Tree and the Stupa. However later paintings (dated from about the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.) and sculpture at Cave 10, as well as other caves at Ajanta, depict the Bodhisattva and events from the life of the Buddha. Remarkable on the time-span of Ajanta's history, Dr. A.P. Jankhedkar, former Director Archaeology and Museums, Maharashtra, says that "Ajanta provides an uninterrupted history of the development of the religious architecture of Buddhism, spanning a period of 700 years though there was a lull of about four centuries in between the two phases of activity".

The second phase of religious and artistic activity at the site takes Ajanta's art to a sublime plane. "At Ajanta, the Vakatakas, who were related by marriage to the legendary Gupta rulers of north India (in the early fifth century), commissioned the excavation of rock-cut caves. They lit the last flame of India's classical art here, and it burned bright, for, Ajanta remains unique as sculpture, architecture and painting of the highest beauty and skill". The murals executed on the walls, ceilings and pillars, convey an entire world: the Buddha kings and commoners in narratives that bring alive and convey fables and their morals to visitors as a subtle exercise in self-realization. "Thus through the art of Ajanta one can learn about various facets of ancient life - from the attire of people, craftsmanship and religious beliefs of the time to the political and economic position of the rulers".

While the Guptas - their rule is recalled as 'The Golden Age' - reeled under the attack of the Huns from the West, Dr. Jankhedkar says, the Vakatakas remained unaffected by the Hun invasion and went on to give the country a heritage in the form of Ajanta. The ruler Harishena (462-483 A.D.) and his feudatories, as



well as wealthy merchants, funded the excavation of caves, a grant by which they believed they would be accumulating merit and also probably regarded themselves as Bodhisattvas. "Under Harishena, (whose kingdom extended from Ujjain to Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh to Gujarat and down the Konkan Coast) it seemed as if the whole court was working for Ajanta, as there was intense activity here: caves were excavated, painted and embellished with sculpture". Dr. Jankhedkar goes on to quote Dr. Walter Spink, who is so enamoured by Ajanta that he feels Ajanta was commissioned by the greatest ruler in the world, (and

Ajanta is this greatest ruler's greatest monument. Ajanta's artistic expression travelled to other lands, by land and sea trade routes, and wall paintings in Buddhist prayer-halls and monasteries in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, China and Japan are believed to have derived inspiration from those at Ajanta.

By the seventh century A.D. Buddhism started fading away, and Ajanta was slowly lost to jungle. It was several centuries later, in 1819, that the caves were discovered. Not by a monk or a merchant, but by an officer of the East India Company in pursuit of a tiger. Intrigued by the sight of

an unusual formation on the rock face in the valley below - from a site now called Ajanta Viewpoint - his group ventured below to discover a lost heritage. Since then there have been restoration efforts at preserving the caves, specially the paintings. Today, the Ajanta caves are one of India's prime destinations and are best visited after the monsoons, when the countryside is lush and the river flowing. Nature's landscape is perfect, and so is Ajanta's beauty. It endures in the heart and mind long after one has left.

*The author is a noted freelance writer.

Message from the Indian Embassy Club

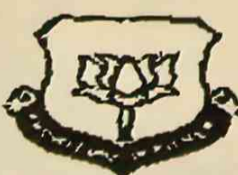
On the occasion of the 53rd anniversary of the Republic Day we, the members of the India Embassy Club in Sana'a, congratulate the Indians in Sana'a and elsewhere and share India's pride in being the largest democracy in the world, representing a benign symbiosis of the inner and the outer, of the quietist and the activist, of science and spirituality and making a confident march towards progress. We revere India's ancient heritage of art, culture, literature and philosophy and feel proud of its being an emerging power in science and industry. We feel particularly proud of its being a rising star in the field of space, nuclear science, and information technology. Thousands of years ago our ancestors reminded us that life was a journey, a journey from falsehood to truth, from darkness to light and from death to immortality. On this auspicious occasion, we wish and pray that in its march towards progress our nation will move not just from falsehood to truth but endlessly from a truth to a higher and a still higher truth. Let us remind ourselves on this occasion that in our upward march we need to move towards a light that heals, inspires, and illuminates and not towards a light that merely dazzles and then burns. May God bless the Indian Republic.

Professor Damodar Thakur
President India Embassy Club
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The Indian Railways, in fact, has been a witness to some of the most cherished moments of our freedom struggle and the history of modern India. Besides being the harbinger of the industrial revolution in India, it has been an active player in the social revolution that is gradually wiping away the socio-economic disparities and bring the people of various regions closer to each other. Mahatma Gandhi chose the windows of the third class railway compartment as his window to see and understand and, later, to unite the people of India to wage an all-powerful non-violent struggle against the British. The Railways is not merely a transport organization. It is a small revolution in itself which has changed our social, cultural and economic life in a number of ways. The Indian Railways is the very symbol of our unity in diversity which reinforces the roots of our vibrant democracy.

Testing Times

But, 50 years after, the Indian Railways is passing through a critical period. Despite being a distinctly more environment-friendly mode of transport as it uses energy five or six times more efficiently than the road transport and less demanding of land, its share in the total transportation has declined from a high 89 per cent in the freight and 70 per cent in passenger traffic in the 50s to 40 per cent and 20 per cent respectively at present. It also faces problems of resources for strengthening, modernizing and expanding the system. The massive investments needed for the development of the railways system have not

been available because of the declining share of the capital from the general exchequer which support the Railway's development considerably in the initial years of planned economy and because of the inherent limitations of an infrastructure like the Railways to generate adequate resources internally. At present, the Railways has to perform the dual role of commercial organization and a vehicle for fulfillment of social obligations. In its latter role, the Railways is required to make investments which are unremunerative and also have to provide subsidized services. Unlike many foreign railway networks, which receive Government subsidies for public service obligations, the Indian Railways is not specifically compensated for these operations.

Obligations

It is true that the Railways is perhaps the only organization bearing such a heavy burden of social obligations. This is affecting its financial health. At the same time, it is also true that the Railways in India is owned by the Government and there it is meant to serve all sections of the society - more so the economically and socially well living in far-flung, remote areas. Thus, conducting operations purely on business grounds with an eye on profits alone cannot be the leading principle for the Indian Railways. If the prolonged debates on the Railway budgets and related issues in Parliament are an indication, perhaps no other subject draws such a close scrutiny as the Railways does. This is so because vast segments of our society are still very backward and any relief offered to them by the Government, is crucial for their day-to-day life. The Railways provides livelihood to millions of our people both directly and indirectly.

With this in view, it is necessary that the problems and issues relating to the Indian Railways are discussed widely so that a better understanding and workable solutions may emerge. It was, with this view, that a couple of years back a status paper was brought out by the Ministry of Railways. More recently, the Rakesh Mohan Committee in its report has analyzed threadbare the present status of issues and problems of the Railways. We have initiated a process of free and frank

By NITISH KUMAR,
Minister for Railways

dialogue involving all the interest groups to work out necessary pragmatic solutions.

On the part of the Railways, we have adopted different pro-active strategies which are aimed at income generation on the one hand and reducing expenditure on the other. The measures for augmenting earnings are being taken both in conventional as well as non-conventional areas.

As a result, the expenditure has begun to stabilize but the improvement in the Railways' earnings is yet to firm up. We need to work out strategies for aggressive marketing in the goods traffic area as also for rationalizing the freight structure so as to make the Railways a preferred and, therefore, customer-friendly transport organization.

Transport Policy

There is also a need to evolve an integrated National Transport Policy based on the inter-dependence of the different modes of transport particularly the Railways vis-à-vis the road sector. The Railways is more suited for long-distance and bulk transport and can save a great deal of expenditure which the nation otherwise spends on diesel through piecemeal transport. In this connection, the innovative 'Roll-on-Roll-off' mode of rail transport, may be mentioned. Under this loaded truck are carried on flat railways wagons. This has already been introduced on the Konkan Railway and preparations to extend these to other Zonal Railways are underway.

Safety

Safety on the railways is another important area on which attention is being focused. The creation of a non-lapsable Special Railway Safety Fund of Rs. 17,000 crore is an important milestone in this direction. It is hoped that we shall be able to wipe out the backlog of replacement of our over-aged assets including tracks, bridges, rolling stock, signaling equipment and safety enhancement devices within the next five to seven years. Special safety drives have also been undertaken to sensitize the railways employees for strict implementation of the safety norms and procedures, with a view to reducing the human error factor. The Konkan Railway Corporation has developed an anti-collision device. Extended field trials for this device are currently underway. We are planning to use this device all over the Indian Railways in a phased manner. The programme for manning the unmanned level crossings and construction of road-over bridges and road-under bridges has been given a greater momentum. During the current financial year sanction has been given for manning 165 unmanned level crossings as against 53 in the previous year. Similarly, the number of road over bridges and road under bridges sanctioned was 105 against 43 in 1999-2000, an increase of 244 per cent. The South Eastern Railways has successfully experimented to check accidents at the unmanned level crossings by installing user-operated hydraulic gate barriers. We

are planning to make a vital use of such hydraulic gates on other Zonal Railways also. These measures will ensure not only safe travel but also an overall improvement in the rail services.

Ensuring security and checking crimes on the railways is another significant aspect which needs greater concern as it affects the common masses traveling on the railways. Law and order basically is the subject of the State Governments. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) is basically responsible for protection of railway property and installations only. It has no law-enforcing powers. In view of this, the security on the railways has to be provided through close cooperation and coordination between the RPF and the concerned State Police.

Instructions have been given to railways officials to work in close coordination with the State Police and Administration upto the highest level and formulate proper security plans for security of passengers on trains and various railway installations. Necessary instruction have also been given for pre-checking and pre-inspection of passenger trains before they leave the yards. Besides, the Railways, has also taken up a programme for sensitization of all its staff for identification on explosive devices.

Various passenger awareness programme have also been taken up through public announcements, posters and films.

Implementation

Another critical area is the long shelf of unfinished projects. In this regard a headway has been made. We are pursuing with

the Ministry of Finance for setting up a an Accelerated Project Development Fund to ensure that the projects which are nearing completion and are important from the commercial and strategic points of view, are taken up on a priority basis and completed as quickly as possible.

Out of a list of over 60 store items, which were hitherto centrally procured by the Railways Board, as many as forty-five have been de-listed and allowed to be procured at the Zonal Railways' levels. In addition, certain commercial powers like quoting station-to-station rates, including offers of discounts on bulk traffic have been given to General Managers with a view to increasing traffic earnings. Another major change that has recently taken place in the Railways in the decentralization of powers. Besides, the General Managers of the Zonal Railways have now been empowered to finalize tenders and contracts upto a value of Rs. 15 crore at their own levels. Similar powers have been given to them with regard to procurement of stores also.

Opportunities Ahead

Railways have a number of production units and workshops spread all over the country. During the last few years these production units have rolled out most modern electric and diesel locomotives and other equipment. These are being exported to some of the developed countries. Through aggressive marketing and necessary tie-ups they are capable of exporting their products even to the developed countries. Our technology is at par with international standards and price-wise very competitive. The Kapurthala Rail Coach Factory has developed facilities for the state-of-art coach manufacturing and very soon they will add a new chapter to passenger comforts on the Indian Railways. These production

units have certainly helped us to conserve the much needed foreign exchange. However, the time has come now when they should diversify their activities and offer the expertise in various allied fields.

The Indian Railways' public sector undertakings like RITES, IRCON, CONCOR and Konkan Railway Corporation have carved out a distinctive international corporate image. They have proved their ability to face international competition not only in the railway-related but in other infrastructure fields also. In a short span of twelve years, the Konkan Railway Corporation has achieved many technological feats. Besides development of the Anti-Collision Device, the Konkan Railway Corporation's specialization in construction of tunnels has also helped it diversify itself in the highway construction activity. These are encouraging developments and I have full faith in the capacity of our engineers to achieve still more. I am sure that the railway engineers will scale further heights of glory in their pursuit of excellence.

Another great thing about Railways is the dedication on the part of its staff. It is this dedication which assures passengers a comfortable sleep while the train is moving in the darkness of the night to its destination. It is not an easy task to run about 13,000 trains everyday. This is possible due to the hard and round-the-clock work put in by the railway employees, a majority of them silently performing their duties in the solitude of deep forests, dangerous terrains, scorching deserts and remote places.

It is true that the Indian Railways is passing through a critical phase but I am sure that with pragmatic approach and with the cooperation of all concerned, we can meet this challenge effectively and bring the Railways back to its prime role in the transport sector of our country.



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The Principal of Indian Embassy School, Sana'a, is pleased to announce that in the academic year 2001-2002, two of our students secured National Level Awards in the All India Chinthana Prakashana Mathematics Examination. In the year 2002-2003, the School is awarded "The Best School at the National Level" in the International level Science Talent Examination, organized by Putani Vignana, India, for the year 2002-2003. Three students, Master Shanon D'Souza of class 8, Miss Dona Anna Cherian of class 6, and Master Eashwar Ranganathan of class 4 won the second, third and fourth rank respectively in the National level. Master Upgeet Singh, Master Anoop Kishore and Master Bharat Khosla won the State awards. Congratulations to the Students and their Science Teachers who prepared the students for the Examination.

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The Management, Staffs & Children of the School greet all the Indian Nationals, NRIs, PIOs on the occasion of 53rd Anniversary of the Republic of India.

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